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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 108, NO. 26 NEW YORK, MONDAY, JUNE 28, 1943 NUMBER 1491

Congress Runs Amuck

THE PREDICTIONS The New Republic made last year about what would happen if we elected the kind of Congress we subsequently did elect came true June 18. In a ten-hour session, unmatched in recent years for sheer irresponsibility and sabotage, our national House of Representatives ran amuck.

In rapid succession, our lower house voted in substantial favor of measures which if upheld in the Senate would bring: 1. Dangerous inflation. 2. Confused and garbled presentation of the facts about the progress of our war. 3. Post-war lack of any attempt at planned return to peacetime ways. No Axis agenda for undermining our strength could improve on these three points. The United States Senate is all that now stands between us and the fulfilment of those three threats.

That shrewd and experienced disrupter, Rep. Everett Dirksen (Rep., Ill.), led the stampede. Dirksen rose in the course of the consideration of the war-agencies-appropriations bill for next year to wave the most attractive red flag any man intent on stampede could wave before a wild-eyed House—the alleged misdeeds of the OPA. One hundred and fifty-six Republicans and twenty-six Democrats, almost all from the very right wing of Southern Democrats, joined forces to pass Dirksen's first inflation amendment, to cut OPA funds from $165,000,00 to $130,000,000, wiping out the already perilously weak enforcement program. After that home run, Dirksen was chosen to follow himself at bat. The next amendment denied wages or expenses to any price-policy-making official, except Administrator Brown, who has not had at least five consecutive years of experience in the field of business in which he is helping to shape OPA policy. That passed, and Rep. Harry Sauthoff stepped up to relieve Dirksen. He proceeded to obtain passage of an amendment forbidding use of any OPA funds for rollbacks on food which have not reached parity prices, or on commodities considered not to be necessities. Accepted without even a roll call. Rep. August Andresen (Rep., Minn.) followed with an amendment to forbid use of any of the funds for programs involving grade labeling and standardization of food, clothing or other civilian commodities. By that time, eighty-five Democrats had wriggled over onto the Republican side and the Republicans were still at bat.

The end of that inning found the administration forces, surprised at what was happening, too confused to halt the rout. Common sense apparently had disappeared from the chamber. One might almost conclude, from a close reading of The Congressional Record, that Dirksen and his followers were deliberately out to legislate for chaos, to bring discontent with the President and his policies at the expense of the conduct of the war.

Having voted for uncontrolled inflation, the Republicans and their Democratic collaborators turned to the OWI as a next key spot for wreckage. The House voted, 218 to 114, to delete from the appropriation measure $5,500,000 intended to finance the domestic operations of the OWI, fifty-five Democrats joining with 160 Republicans. Only five Republicans voted to

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1943, IN THE U.S.A. BY EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 40 EAST 49 ST., NEW YORK 17, N. Y.
ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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support the OWI, although the domestic branch of the agency has until lately been headed by Republican Gardner Cowles, who was succeeded this week by Republican Palmer Hoyt.

The Democrats who voted against the OWI were led, as might have been expected, by Joe Starnes of Alabama, that half-pint Martin Dies who once identified Christopher Marlowe as "one of those Communists." It is reported that the Democrats who voted with Starnes, most of them Southerners, did so because of the efforts of the Domestic Branch of the OWI to encourage the participation of Negroes in the war effort. If this is true, it is an astonishing commentary on the real quality of our democracy and will make it difficult for the Foreign Branch of the OWI, which was left in existence, to convince the rest of the nations of the world that the Four Freedoms mean what we have been saying they did.

The chief purpose in the creation of the OWI was to have an agency with authority to prevent other agencies from talking to the nation at cross purposes. To a large degree this has been done, and we can ill afford to go back to the old system of every bureau for itself and the devil take the hindmost. Perhaps the good sense of the Senate will restore the funds for the OWI's domestic operations and remedy the situation under which Elmer Davis has stated that he will resign.

The Senate's almost casual acceptance that same day of the House's butchering of the National Resources Planning Board is not, we hope, indicative of what the Senate will do in these most recent cases of House folly. The NRPB has had roughly $1,000,000 each year for the last several years, and this year the President had sent Congress a special plea to continue the board so that it could work out details for a post-war social-security plan to tide us over the emergencies that peace will bring. The House Appropriations Committee last January refused to recommend any funds for the board at all. In May the Senate overrode the House recommendation, but the House conferees stood pat, and last week steered a new vote of the House calling for complete liquidation of the NRPB by August 31, with no transfer of its duties to other agencies and no performance of its functions by any other agency at any time thereafter without express authority of Congress. This is the resolution for chaos which the Senate agreed to by a voice vote, without discussion, last week.

A similar Senate attitude toward the measures which the House passed in the June 18 stampede is a grim thing to contemplate. It is certainly reasonable to conclude from the generally fine actions of the Senate on such recent matters as the Farm Security appropriation that this calamity will not happen. Real statesmanship is called for. The antics of the fourteen Senators who have been filling the press with their plans to stampede the Senate are certainly not typical of Senate sentiment as a whole.

Those men in Congress who opposed our entrance into the war and have fought, down the line, against our full mobilization for participation in it, have now reached the high point of their newest strategy. The careful use of congressional investigating committees to create confusion and panic within the OPA and other war agencies last week gave way to the next step in this plot against the President. The tactic of "administration by appropriation" has reached its maturity. The public and the war are the sufferers.

Our primary need, as The New Republic repeatedly contended last year, is still "a Congress to win the war." The congressional elections are fought, but in the meantime desperate efforts should be made to impress the impressionable members of this Congress with our deep disapproval of the actions taken in the House last week. If present plans for adjournment during July and August are carried through, it is imperative that local groups in every congressional district organize to tell their congressman how they feel while he is at home. A loud chorus of constituents' cries has been known to change a congressman's mind when nothing else could. The voters must wake up with a rush to their responsibilities if we are to reclaim the ground and the time lost for us by this Congress. Find out how your congressman stood on these crucial measures and let him know that, as the United Auto Workers are saying, you are "Keeping Score for '44."

Coal

It is possible that the coal strike may be settled before this issue of The New Republic reaches its readers; we hope this proves to be true. Few matters in recent times have been so muddled as the negotiations with the coal miners, and all parties have been guilty in varying degrees, though we feel the heaviest responsibility lies with John L. Lewis. Certainly the operators have done everything they could to force the issue into the hands of the government. Lewis has seized the opportunity to make political capital against President Roosevelt, whom he hopes to see defeated if he runs again in 1944. There has been a disturbing lack of clarity regarding the respective functions of Harold Ickes and of the War Labor Board. There has also been a disheartening failure of the government to make the miners realize that this country is engaged in a war for self-preservation and that no grievance of any group of men, however well justified, can be allowed to interfere with the military effort. Finally, Congress has a heavy responsibility. It has prevented the administration from holding down prices, and has thereby brought not only the coal miners but all organized labor to the brink of open rebellion. The whole incident could well go down in the textbooks as a model illustration of how not to administer the democratic process in time of crisis.

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Race Riots

The race riots in Detroit and elsewhere demand vigorous emergency action. The first necessity is to stop them wherever they occur and prevent them wherever they are seriously threatened, by police action if that is possible and by military law if local police forces are inadequate.

But stopping violence is a far cry from discovering and eliminating its causes. For the sake of the nation's future, we must also carefully trace these causes, which are varied and complex, and must take steps to eliminate them at the source. At the moment nobody knows exactly what they are, or how much weight to assign to the various probabilities. Axis instigation is one factor, but there is also the explosive material with which Axis propaganda works. Injustice to Negroes and Mexicans on the one hand, and race prejudice among whites on the other, of course threaten collisions. These are made dangerous by strains incident to the war, such as housing shortages, food shortages, labor shortages. And they are derived from deeper sources, such as lack of education and opportunity for both whites and other races.

What we should at once institute is a National Commission on Racial Relations, with the breadth and competence to lay the issues bare and recommend remedial action. Race hostilities may easily turn out to be the Achilles heel of one of the strongest nations in the world.

"Japan First"

Mr. Hartshorne's letter on page 863 of this issue seems to us not to be abreast of the current developments. We now know that since the latest Washington conference, the question of the European and the Asiatic aspects of the war can no longer be considered on an "either or" basis. Prime Minister Curtin of Australia has indicated clearly that a major offensive against Japan can be expected in the near future. This does not mean, however, that we shall not attack Hitler with the utmost vigor and at the earliest possible moment. The attack on Japan will be largely in terms of air power, and of this we now have enough for offensive operations in both theatres.

The weakness in Mr. Hartshorne's argument, in general, is that he does not sufficiently realize that we are fighting one war in two parts of the world, or take enough account of Russia's participation. We can immediately make a substantial beginning against Japan, by harassing her shipping, capturing some of her more vital outposts, as we have already done with Guadalcanal and Attu, by invading Burma, after the monsoon season, and reopening the Burma Road. For the final knockout, however, Russia is of great importance; and it is clear that Russia does not intend to get embroiled on both fronts, if she can help it, as long as Germany remains a serious threat in the west. Indeed, throughout his letter Mr. Hartshorne writes as though this were solely an American war and as though the making of grand strategy were entirely in our hands. This is both untrue and unfair to our allies, who have borne and are bearing much more of the brunt than we.

The Food Muddle

The muddle over the food question seems to be moving rapidly toward a climax. Congress is in a mood of angry hostility toward subsidies and the rollback—so much so that it may forbid the whole system. Chester Davis, War Food Administrator, has threatened to resign unless he is given complete control over prices and rationing. Local shortages of specific items seem more frequent and more serious than before. Either because of increasing black-market operations or for some other reason, price ceilings appear to be cracking badly.

There is every sign that the President's political opponents are using the scattered food shortages about the country as a means of arousing popular antagonism toward the administration. A committee of Congress demands a food tsar, while representatives of the farm bloc reiterate that there is no real shortage and say the whole trouble is due to bureaucratic interference with the growers and food industry. How a tsar would bring less interference and control it is difficult to see. And on other occasions, when price ceilings or subsidies are under attack, the very same spokesmen predict a dire national undersupply unless the farmers are paid higher prices. Here is a second contradiction, since

Doyle in The Philadelphia Record

"Don't You Know Your Mother, Boys?"

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if the trouble is not with the supply but with faulty distribution, higher prices would not remedy it.

Errors to Date

The handling of the food problem by the administration is not above criticism, and on various occasions The New Republic has printed comment of this kind. When Leon Henderson, under fire from Congress, was allowed to resign as chief of the OPA, it was a signal that rigorous price control and rationing might be sacrificed. Again and again the authorities have been tardy in announcing rationing of scarce products, or have allowed the news that they were to be rationed to leak out ahead of time, thus encouraging hoarding. It was a fault not to follow Bernard Baruch's advice to freeze all prices at the beginning, and later confusion was caused by trying to control retail prices without following through straight to the sources of supply. It is probable that the army has not coördinated its purchasing well with civilian necessities in the several localities, and there has been no single control over both.

But if the administration is at fault, Congress has on almost every occasion pushed it in the wrong direction, and its howling would be considerably louder if adequate measures were taken. Through its tenderness to the farm bloc and profit-seeking business, and its hostility to thoroughgoing executive management, Congress has done its best to botch the program at crucial points. Its recent attack on the use of subsidies in the price rollback is a pertinent case. Hardly less serious has been its consistent refusal to grant the OPA sufficient funds to administer and police a thorough system, as well as its demand for political patronage in OPA appointments and its opposition to grade labeling.

We Can Learn from Britain

Something closer to the highly successful British system would promise better assurance of adequate nutrition for all and genuine price control. In Britain, as Varian Fry points out in this issue, although the producers and the distributing industry are thoroughly organized in coöperation with the government program, and as little as possible is done to interrupt the usual channels of trade, the whole process, from farm to retail consumer, is under strict public control, and the government itself has a monopoly of wholesale purchasing. It can pay what it likes to stimulate production, and charge retail consumers no more than they can afford for the best possible diet under the circumstances. Under this system subsidies are taken for granted—where they are needed—but black markets are almost nonexistent, production of the most necessary foods is stimulated at the expense of those considered less desirable, and everyone is assured of enough to sustain health. In fact, it is probable that the average of nutrition is considerably better than before the war.

If Congress were sincere in its desire to improve the food program, it would exert pressure on the administration to move in this direction rather than objecting to almost all the steps that bring our system closer to the British. Our problem is somewhat different, it is true, but coördinated and systematic control would be obliged to cut across many of the short-sighted interests that Congress has been so volubly protecting. Incidentally, perhaps the greatest help of all would be a fiscal policy to close the inflationary gap—a matter in which Congress has been dilatory indeed.

Since the administration must cope with congressional opposition in any case, perhaps it should cease trying to conciliate its enemies. Every step in that direction helps to increase the very confusion which gives Congress an opportunity to exploit irritations with food scarcities and price control. A thorough and logical program, in place of the long series of ad-hoc expedients, could at least stand on its own feet, and if Congress refused to permit it to operate, the responsibility would rest where it belongs.

What Freedom for Whose Press?

Frederick C. Crawford, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, came out a few days ago in favor of a free press. Certainly nobody will argue against Mr. Crawford in favor of an unfree press; but his speech gives occasion to stop and ask: free for whom? Free for what?

It is an ironic fact that nearly all the talk about a free press heard during the past ten years has come, not from the working editors of the newspapers but from the publishers, most of whom are business men and not journalists. The conclusion is irresistible that what these publishers—and Mr. Crawford—want is not freedom for editors to tell the truth, but freedom for the conservatives—of whom they are a part—to seek to dictate economic policies to the government and people of the United States. These are the very men who have been quick to rule out freedom of the press when it came to telling disagreeable truths about members of their own class, in the columns of their own papers. They fought the application of NRA principles to the press, under the banner of freedom of the press, though in fact what the NRA would have done to them was to prohibit the use of child labor and to prevent their publishing papers in insanitary old firetraps. Over and over they have sought special privileges for themselves on the specious plea of freedom.

A large majority of the total circulation of all American newspapers is controlled by men who are highly unsympathetic to the New Deal and have used their power, day in and day out, to misrepresent both the accomplishments and the intentions of the government. They have consistently raised the bogey of radicalism in Washington when every honest member of their staffs knew that it was a completely false issue.

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We certainly do not suggest that these papers ought to be muzzled by anybody, for any reason; but assuredly, society has not yet solved the problem of press freedom when the most important newspapers of the country are controlled by a group of hard-bitten big-business men who know and care little about the traditions of journalism, and who are determined to make the country over in their own image.

Elk Hills

It is very good news that Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox has canceled the "steal" contract with Standard Oil of California for our rich Elk Hills naval oil reserve. However, Knox's agreement to terminate the arrangement was not made with very good grace and came only after Assistant Attorney General Norman Littell had testified before the Public Lands Committee of the House that the contract was "illegal and invalid." Even then the Secretary and his associates still contended that the contract was a good one and in the public interest.

Had Attorney General Littell been called upon by the committee to go into the second part of his report on the case to the President, Knox would have had to climb down from his refuge of righteousness. The facts about the tremendous advantages accruing to Standard under the contract, some of which were revealed in last week's issue of The New Republic, completely destroy Knox's argument. We are glad to know that Rep. Hardin Peterson does not intend that the Public Lands Committee shall drop the case until all the facts surrounding it have been made public. Representative Peterson and Attorney General Littell deserve public appreciation for their forthright actions in getting to the bottom of the Elk Hills deal, and we hope that they will not stop until the real story has been told.

Wavell as Viceroy

The appointment of Field Marshal Wavell as Viceroy of India probably means little one way or the other as regards the question of Indian independence. The Indian Nationalists are protesting the appointment, on the ground that the Viceroy should be a political and not a military figure; but it seems clear that he will carry out policies made in London and that anyone else who might have been chosen would have done the same. So far as the British can control it, the whole question of Indian freedom is adjourned until after the war. More than likely the appointment of Wavell was simply a convenient device to remove from the military scene an officer who, while not conspicuously disqualified, seems to lack the imaginative, brilliant, aggressive spirit that is needed to retake Burma, reopen the Burma Road and prepare the full-scale assault on Japan's home islands necessary for victory.

The Tactics of Invasion

IN THIS TIME of great military decisions, creative thinking must be done in the field of war strategy and war planning. That is what gives importance to Max Werner's new book "Attack Can Win in '43" (Little, Brown, $1.75). American military commentators have, on the whole, been bewitched and bewildered by the course of the war to an extent that has made "military expert" a term of mild derision. Yet it must be added that nowhere in the world during the course of the present war has any writer achieved the power, the brilliance and the accuracy of prediction that is represented in the succession of Werner's books.

There is no luck or magic or brilliant guesswork in Werner's calling of the turns of the war. He is a solid student of history and social action who has understood that war is part of both. He has thought in the concrete terms of arms and men, of economic strength and casualty rates and military reserves; but he has also included the less tangible elements, national psychology and the will to win. Unlike other military commentators, he has not been blinded by the myth of German invincibility, prejudice against the Russian social system or the narrow perspectives of military tactics as distinguished from war planning.

Now more than ever the American people and their leaders need this kind of thinking. For the approach of victory is as dangerous to our clarity as the specter of defeat once was. There are haunting questions that pursue us. Some are on the side of pessimism. Since the war has lasted only four years and Hitler still retains his vast European fortress and a large army, won't the rest of it take even longer? Isn't an invasion attempt terribly dangerous, as Dieppe showed? Don't we need to wait until we have an invasion army as powerful as Hitler's whole force? Others are on the side of optimism. We will never need to invade Europe, will we, if we can succeed in filling the skies over Germany with enough bombers? Isn't Germany cracking now, and won't the war be over after a few months of death rained down from the sky?

Werner turns a stern visage to both types of attitude. To the pessimists he points out that military time is far different from ordinary time; that Hitler's Russian disasters marked a turning point in the war; that the Russian army cannot be defeated and that the German army cannot win; and that, given the huge forces that are locked in a deadly embrace on the Russian front, the air, sea and land power of the Americans and British are more than enough to turn the scale and decide the issue. But to the "easy war" advocates he points out that, while the issue can be decided this year, it can be decided only by actual land invasion of Europe in force, and by a genuine coalition war in which the Anglo-American invasion and the Russian front form part of an integrated war plan.

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The whole analysis makes sense. And it sheds a powerful light on the questions that are being raised now on the great debate over the strategy to be pursued by the United Nations.

On the great question whether a successful invasion is now possible, his answer is unequivocally Yes. He argues here chiefly from the fact that the Russian war is still absorbing the preponderant portion of Hitler's men and materials and economic strength, and that the disasters in Russia and Tunisia have broken the fighting will of his soldiers. The rest of his strength is dispersed rather weakly over the whole extent of the Continent. Some day, says Werner, historians will write that the analysis of German war prospects made by Hitler's own generals at this time was far more gloomy than the estimates made by ours.

On the question of what sort of invasion, Werner is again clear. He does not specify the exact route to be chosen. He does say that there must be a major thrust from the British Isles toward Northwest Europe; auxiliary thrusts toward northern Europe and from the Mediterranean; and diversionary thrusts elsewhere. All of these together add up to the attack on German power from the west, and will be paralleled by a simultaneous thrust from the east by the Russian armies.

The discusssion of the school of air-war military thinkers is unusually biting, but is not without justice. The interesting thing about Werner's whole method of approach is that, while he is keenly aware of the new war weapons and the Nazi revolution in war technology, he believes that the basic factors in the strategy and planning of war are not very different from those of World War I. In this sense he belongs to the great tradition in military thinking. And he prefers therefore to place air war in perspective, as part of a whole array of techniques, rather than to see it as decisive in itself.

To those who ask that we slough off our part in the European fighting, and concentrate on Japan, Werner's answer is simple. He points out that only a decisive European victory can create the means for a combined assault on Japanese power in the strategic zones; and that the two fronts are not separate wars but connected parts of one.

The disquieting thing about Werner's book is that he does not raise directly as a question what is, in reality, the biggest question of all. Assuming that attack *can* bring a decision in 1943, *will that attack be made* under the requisite conditions? Here it is not only a question whether it will be made in time and in sufficient force: it seems difficult to believe that Roosevelt and Churchill will long postpone the invasion, or that they will first try to exhaust the possibilities of the air-war experiment. The more important question is whether the invasion will be made chiefly as an Anglo-American measure, or whether it will be part of a genuine embracing coalition plan for the war as a whole.

It is not hard to see that Werner could scarcely undertake to answer these questions. The answer must come from us. For the military decisions of leaders are always taken or not taken in a context of the national will.

The War on Elmer Davis

WHEN THE HOUSE refused to appropriate funds for the Domestic Branch of the Office of War Information, much more was involved than a personal attack on Elmer Davis. He is widely liked, and all except a few congressional disciples of The Chicago Tribune admit that he has acted with notable tact and moderation. It is ridiculous to compare him with Dr. Goebbels or Virginio Gayda; he hasn't even attempted to do what the Creel Committee did successfully in the last war. Any other man in the same position, whatever his ability, his character or his political record, would be subject to the same congressional abuse.

It cannot even be said that the attack was really directed at the policies of the OWI. No matter what policies it followed—no matter whether it issued propaganda for home consumption or the unadorned facts, or nothing but news bulletins for the daily press; no matter whether it favored labor or management, or neither; farmers or city consumers, or neither; Russia or Poland, or neither; no matter whether it called for a tough war or tried to make the public believe that this could still be an easy war; no matter whether its top officials were New Dealers or conservative Democrats or Republicans—it would still be slandered and abused.

The truth is that its policies have been cautious and reasonable to a fault. It has never tried to lead the public by the nose, or to make newspapers echo the views of the administration, or to whip up anger against the Axis by inventing atrocities. It has gone so far in the opposite direction that the real atrocities of the Germans in this war have been approached with diffidence, as if they were horrors that couldn't be discussed in polite society. In general, and except for a brief period when advertising men tried to get control of the agency, it has made its appeal to the common sense and patriotism of the public. It has issued no fervid exhortations, furnished no four-minute speakers and organized no patriotic rallies. It has never attempted to influence the public on the emotional level that leads directly to action.

If anybody thought that the function of the OWI was to improve morale and unify the country in the face of danger, he would be forced to conclude that its record is one of failure. It hasn't convinced the miners that they ought to dig the coal that is necessary for war production instead of following John L. Lewis in his

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political adventures. It hasn't created public feeling against those industrialists who, as shown in several confidential reports, are trying to provoke their own men into striking; they think that strikes at this time would weaken the labor unions. Undersecretary Patterson says that the production of supplies for the army ground forces has declined since April. He thinks that part of the decline was caused by complacency and overconfidence on the part of both labor and management. The OWI has failed to change that state of mind.

It has tried hard to improve racial relations, but it didn't succeed in preventing the riots in Los Angeles and Beaumont and Mobile, or the Klan-instigated strike in Detroit against the hiring of Negroes as skilled workers. Any war is likely to generate ill feeling on the home front. People are overworked and overwrought; they have to stand in line; they can't go where they want to go or buy what they want to buy; and these frustrations produce a feeling of anger that ought to be directed against the enemy. Too often in this war it has been directed against other Americans—against Jews, Negroes, Mexicans, union labor, Congress or the administration. The country is full of internal animosities that an Office of War Information might have helped to prevent, if it had been given authority to act.

And there are other examples of its failures in the field of public morale. There is, for example, the growth of the black markets, which might be prevented by public feeling against them—but the public is not helping much to stamp them out. There is the effort of farm organizations to destroy price ceilings, even at the cost of inflation. Everywhere is the feeling that, as we have heard several people say, "I'm going to get mine while the getting is good." There are indications that this feeling is also widespread in the army. One soldier wrote us from a Southern camp (and we have seen other letters in the same vein): "Everybody seems busy getting his own little promotion and feathering his own little nest, oh, so damned carefully, because nobody has been able to absorb a nobler philosophy. If there is one around, the old OWI story, it hasn't been put very convincingly—maybe it can't be, with Congress the way it is."

Congress has clearly indicated that it wants no efforts to improve the national morale. Accordingly the Domestic Branch of the OWI has confined itself to more modest but still indispensable tasks. It has brought order and system into government publicity and has reduced the number of government bulletins. It has persuaded the Departments of War and the Navy to be more communicative in their communiqués. It has given sound advice to magazine editors, book publishers, radio announcers and motion-picture producers who wanted to advance the national interests in wartime but didn't know how to go about it. In Washington, it has prevented many squabbles among government officials by reading their speeches and statements in advance. It has explained government policies and helped the public to understand what the government agencies were doing.

Essentially it is because of these modest achievements that the OWI was attacked on the floor of the House. A bi-partisan majority in Congress hopes that the New Deal will be defeated in 1944. Some members of Congress are more interested in fighting Roosevelt than they are in fighting Hitler. These men reason bluntly that the more squabbles there are among government officials, and the less public understanding there is of government measures, the better chance their side will have of winning the next election. The policies they were condemning were not those of the OWI, but those of the administration. Their attack on Elmer Davis was directed against the President.

As we point out elsewhere, it is still uncertain what the Senate will do. It has shown a much greater sense of wartime responsibility than the House, but this time the Senators will have to act quickly, and there is a chance that the Domestic Branch of the OWI will be sacrificed to its enemies in the rush to pass appropriation bills before July 1. Even if its funds are restored, the struggle against the OWI will continue. We suggest to Mr. Roosevelt that it is time for him to go before the public—not once, but preferably in a whole series of speeches—and defend his wartime agencies. For the last year, he has been devoting most of his efforts to the struggle abroad, but the main outlines of military strategy have now been fixed. Meanwhile it is possible that we might lose the war as the result of developments on the home front. That is the scene of the crucial struggle at this moment. It is time to stop the people who have borrowed Lenin's slogan and applied it to international cartelism instead of international communism. It is time to keep them from turning the foreign war into a civil war.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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The OPA Crack-Up

When the House voted recently to prevent price rollbacks by curtailing the OPA's appropriations, it merely acted as an external force delivering a blow in a process of destruction that has been going on within the OPA itself. The end is now in sight.

The smash-up will bring in its wake, (1) wasting of food, (2) shoppers with ration stamps unable to purchase food from stores without supplies, (3) women, and men too, lined up for food outside stores which are said to have supplies, (4) a huge part of our food supply taken up by the black market. These are not haphazard vignettes of what will happen but the conclusions of W. Averill Harriman, Lend-Lease Coordinator, who has just completed a report on the British methods of ensuring food for the people.

All around us we can see the beginning of this process. Public confidence in the OPA has already ebbed to the point where most of the country regards it as the butt for bitter ridicule. Retailers and distributors are being carried into a maelstrom of inventory speculation and price boosting. Runaway prices greet the consumer on every hand. Retailers, scenting inflation, are callous toward customers, and indifferent to OPA enforcement. The OPA staff is permeated with the knowledge that most of their enforcement work is for show and that the very price regulations are sham. The OPA has lost its own self-respect, along with that of the public.

In the process of breaking down the OPA from within, Brown had plenty of help from without. The canning industry gave him Lou Maxon, the Detroit advertising man. Maxon, in an almost unprecedented campaign, took to the newspapers his demand for more power. He publicly criticized Brown and OPA policy, threatening to quit if his demands were not granted. Privately he is said to have insisted that what he really wanted to do was to clean out the reds and the pinks and go back home and make some money. Maxon's behavior, from his first statement to the press to his arrogant indifference to the publication of proof that his summer home was a Teapot Dome of ration points, has been one of the great contributing factors to the general loss of confidence in the OPA.

On Brown, and on Maxon, rests the responsibility for the forcing of the resignations of John Hamm, senior deputy administrator, David Ginsburg, and now of J. K. Galbraith, the last top-flight leader left in the OPA who believed in price control. With Galbraith out, Tom Emerson, in charge of enforcement, and Paul O'Leary, rationing administrator, also go. They complete the roster of those who believed in keeping prices down and inflation out. In place of Galbraith, Brown appointed Austin Hoffman. Galbraith was always being attacked because he was a professor—you know, "he had never met a payroll." Hoffman is a professor too, but the business interests so active in denouncing Galbraith welcomed him by saying that his appointment "appeared to be a good omen." Which means they thought he wouldn't fight rising prices. They must have guessed wrong, for Hoffman lasted just seven days.

Galbraith's ouster and Brown's new appointments confirmed for business and for Congress that the OPA is now "playing ball" 100 percent. To get that result, business and the farm bloc used their big guns. The food industry not only mobilized but marshaled the farm bloc, the retailers, the textile industry and Congress. The Boren Committee, investigating standardization, grade labeling and newsprint control, has become the sounding board for criticism against all price control. The Smith Committee is chipping away at rent control. The Banking Committee is attacking any attempt to set up subsidies. The House Committee on Small Business is investigating the entire OPA. To placate the politicians—I quote The New York Times—"the administrator has been replacing local and regional OPA officials with appointments suggested by congressional representatives of the areas involved." Still sensitive to the results of the last election, members of Congress are said to regard this "political fence-building" with an appreciative eye. Readers will remember the resignation on June 4 of Russell Potter, acting New York district director, because of "political machinations designed to create a political patronage machine." In his place was appointed Frank Russell, who forthwith boasted to the press that he was "a pal of Frank Kelly," Tammany leader in Brooklyn. Potter in his resignation cited eight instances of political appointments in New York alone.

Though the headlines now say that business men and Congress are hopeful of the OPA's new policy and that opposition to the OPA is easing, they will not stop until the OPA is finished with—and entirely. The reason is that they have a plan of their own. This plan has been attributed to Charles H. Fleisher, an A & P executive, who resigned from the OPA recently, along with other business men all of whom opposed the institution of the dollars-and-cents ceiling prices which, with enforcement, might have lowered food prices from two to four percent. The Fleisher plan is now better known as the Lippmann plan, since Walter Lippmann espoused it in his column of May 27 under the caption, "Last Days of a White Elephant." Briefly, here is what the big-money boys want. Each agency controlling production shall also control prices. Chester Davis is responsible for food production. He will also

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have charge of food rationing and pricing. If he cannot get food produced cheaply enough to sell at reasonable retail prices, he will pay producers some sort of subsidy. Similarly, Ickes will price and ration gasoline and oils; Jeffers will administer tires, tubes and other rubber articles; the Federal Housing Authority will control rents; and the Office of Civilian Requirements will set prices and rations for automobiles, clothing, shoes and other non-food articles. Price enforcement and inspection for all these activities would be in the hands of the Treasury Department. Lippmann would like Davis, Ickes and the other heads of commodity agencies, to become a price committee, headed by Byrnes, for the determining of general policy. This program, as it refers to the food field, is already before Congress in the little-talked-about Jenkins bill, which would make Davis responsible for food production, rationing and pricing.

The plan is, as you see, not a columnist's dream, but has the support of business and Congress. The great specialist on food, Herbert Hoover, has incorporated it into his Victory program. It will place prices and rationing directly in the hands of the very agencies most sensitive to producers' desires. These agencies have already fought the OPA's every effort to lower prices. The plan is an invitation to inflation, particularly because it is so cumbersome as to be unenforceable. And make no mistake about it, Brown can do all the appeasing he likes—and that is a great deal—but the pro-inflation bloc will not accept the OPA if there is any likelihood of achieving this plan, or even an approximation of it.

So Brown's efforts to be of help to the producers, processors and speculators are achieving only the result of suicide. In the short period of his leadership all sections of the public have lost faith in it. In this present crisis only the leaders of the women's organizations, the AFL and the CIO have raised their voices to demand its continuation. And these were the leaders, and only the leaders, since the rank and file doesn't trust the OPA and doesn't want it. The paradox is that the leaders have no faith in the OPA, but are defending it as a last barrier to inflation.

Inflation is coming fast. The recent AFL study of food prices showed rises like this from January, 1941, to May, 1943: bread, 22 percent; butter, 69 percent; oranges, 116 percent; hamburger, 172 percent; boiled ham, 212 percent; potatoes, 219 percent. Since May the rises have been accelerated. Merchants disregard ceilings, and consumers, glad to get the foods, forget about prices. Even as you and I.

I think the leaders of labor are wrong to spend a moment fighting for the OPA's life. Better than I, they know the restlessness in labor's ranks caused by the way it has functioned under Brown. In a grim report to the President they warned that "discontent and unrest are spreading among American workers." Explicitly, they stated that Brown "has failed to roll back or even hold back prices of strategic cost-of-living items. Many OPA dollars-and-cents price ceilings are higher than the food prices reached in the first week in May." The indictment, signed by the six top leaders of the AFL, the CIO and the Railroad Brotherhoods, goes on to cite Brown's failure to fight special interests, his discharge of his most competent aides and his failure to enforce ceilings.

The function of the OPA must be performed. Any other course will bring us to our knees, with hunger all around us. But that function has got to be performed by an organization respected by the public, one that is tough and able to give and take punches in the interest of the general public. A reorganization of the OPA will not work. Brown and his cohorts have got to go. Real power must be given a new agency. The WPB Office of Civilian Requirements, a target of the pro-inflation bloc which is backing the Maloney bill to make the OCR a separate agency so they can get back into full-time civilian production without interference from the army or navy, belongs with a new price-control agency. This would, in a measure, be a return to the design for the OPACS, which, you remember, preceded the OPA. In setting up such a new agency, Roosevelt would have a civilian set-up capable of gauging and supplying the requirements of our population. A major responsibility, it would need a ranking official to head it. At hand the President has Fred Vinson, the new Economic Stabilizer. He is still fresh and commands the requisite respect. If the public is given this kind of agency quickly, inflation can still be stopped despite those who are fighting for what they call "a little inflation" as a good thing. Like John L. Lewis, who wants bigger, if not better, pay checks for his miners; or big business, seeking to drain off excess income from your pocket into its own; or speculators seeing easy money in rapid commodity-price increases; or financiers and industrialists wanting to pay off bond issues, mortgages and other fixed indebtedness with depreciated dollars. Not to forget a sizable bloc in government which sees the "little inflation" as a method of protecting the country from a severe depression.

While the reports of Harriman's findings do not say that he favors a new agency, he points to the necessity of incorporating the British system of control into our own methods. He says that the OPA program of simple consumer rationing is not sufficient "for securing necessary tight control of inflow into the system, avoiding impossible price situations, assuring proper allocation of supplies and effecting maximum economy in manpower and transport." He would achieve these ends by monopoly purchase and sale of essential commodities by the government or by unified, government-supervised trade organizations. He favors the garnering by the government of all essential goods by purchase,

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as is done in Britain. This system can be incorporated into a new agency here.

A new combined Office of Price Control and Civilian Supply operating on these lines can still save us from the nearest inflationary rocks. Brown's ouster, the abolition of the OPA and the creation of a new agency directly under Vinson are immediately necessary. If we achieve this, and all of us will have to shout to get this kind of program, half of the President's seven-point anti-inflation program of April 27, 1942, can begin to be realized. And lest we forget—the seven-point program is as good as it ever was, only, after more than a year, it is time for a public, aroused by the wolf of inflation, to throw all its weight right now into the fight to get something better than Brown's hari-kari OPA ever dreamed of being.

A. G. MEZERIK

Inside Germany Today

WE ARE IN THE HABIT of considering Germany from a bombardier's view. We read and talk about military objectives, about strategic industrial centers, about vital communications points. We have grown familiar with the geography and know the names of cities, dams and railway junctions by heart. We have seen them on reconnaissance photographs where, between heavy clouds of smoke, scarcely recognizable to the layman's eye, lie the ruins of the bombed objectives. But a more impenetrable cloud hides the everyday life of a people who, not so long ago, seemed on the way to domination of the world and who, today, have become the garrison of a besieged fortress.

The military defeats of the past few months have had a profound psychological effect on the Germans. They are bad losers. It is significant that in talking about the North African collapse the Germans have called it "Tunisgrad." The Stalingrad catastrophe is still very fresh in their memories as a military disaster such as the German army has not experienced in the last hundred years. The Nazi propagandists have been forced to utilize the debacle of the second winter campaign in Russia in order to make capital out of it for their own purposes. The gloomiest pictures of German history and legend—the story of the "Götterdämmerung," the destruction of the Nibelungs in Attila's burning hall—were conjured up by the Nazi press to inspire the German people to new sacrifices.

However, translated into the mundane language of everyday life, German mythology has found its contemporary expression in the paragraphs of the decree issued on January 27, 1943, calling for total mobilization. The decree required all men from sixteen to sixty-five and all women from seventeen to forty-five who were not already working forty-eight hours a week, as well as all independent business men employing fewer than five persons, to register. They would have to accept any position to which they were assigned. Exceptions were made for mothers of small children.

"A million workers have been won for the war industry through the closing of retail and artisan shops," Reich Economic Chief Funk declared on May 13. This figure may be exaggerated, but there is no doubt that the total-mobilization decree affected the lower middle class more than any other group. Early in February, Dr. Funk issued orders amplifying the provisions:

> All commercial firms and stores which are not indispensable to the supply of the population are to be shut down. All small craftsmen's shops will be canvassed and all that are not vital to the war effort or to the essential minimum of civilian supply will be closed. All restaurants, bars and taverns which are not vital to the war effort or to civilian supply will be closed. For banking and insurance, measures of rationalization and standardization, previously initiated, will now be rigidly enforced. All the measures described will be carried out with the utmost speed so that the entire campaign will be completed by March 15.

If there are no goods to sell, very few stores are vital. In one town nine out of eleven tobacconists' were closed; in another, seven out of eight. Two book stores and four stationers' were merged into one shop in the latter town. The doors of the last candy and toy shops were closed. Four dress and lingerie shops were combined into one. All too often the closing of a small business redounds to the benefit of a local party boss. For example, in one city the local group leader of the Nazi Party was the only carpenter permitted to remain in business. Three other carpenters' shops were closed; he simply took over their machinery and employed the formerly independent carpenters as workers.

The introduction of "total mobilization" did not go very smoothly. Those required to register found all kinds of ways to avoid it. Consequently, the time limit for registration was extended two weeks. At the time that announcement was made, the papers were filled with reports of arrest and imprisonment of "work dodgers." Most of the offenders were women, who refused to take the jobs to which they were assigned. They received sentences of from three months to a year in prison. The German Labor Front organized a tremendous campaign to popularize the "beauty of labor," directed at German women who prefer office work to work in the factories. "The war industries of the Third Reich are not sweatshops," the Labor Front declared. Nevertheless, women in offices are better paid than women in industry. In war plants, the ten-hour day is frequently exceeded; in many factories twelve hours is the rule and, in exceptional cases, a

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shift may work fourteen or even sixteen hours a day.

Just at the time when the newly mobilized workers were being distributed to the factories and taught their new jobs, and ten to fourteen-year-old children were being sent to do honorary Hitler Youth service on the farms and tens of thousands of new foreign workers were being brought into the country, the surprising proposal was made in leading Nazi circles that working hours be shortened. On May 1, "National Labor Day," a high official of the Labor Front, Dr. Theodore Schupfauer, made a speech about working hours in which he stated that an investigation in large factories had shown that there was a differential of 20 percent between the theoretical ten-hour working day and the actual working day. It was not clear from his speech to what extent loafing or slow-downs were believed to be responsible. However, Dr. Schupfauer announced a scientific discovery: "It has been ascertained that there are certain definite limitations to the human capacity for work." On the basis of these scientific facts, Dr. Schupfauer made a daring proposal, namely, that in view of the fact that only eight hours' work was being done, the advisability of a return to the eight-hour day should be weighed. A few weeks later the Berlin Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung reported that shorter working hours were being tried in a number of large factories and that results had been satisfactory.

Experimentation with shorter working hours marks a complete reversal in Nazi labor policy. Undoubtedly, experience with the new labor forces, the older craftsmen, former shopkeepers and housewives, called for drastic action. These workers just could not keep up under existing working conditions. Women collapsed on the machines; absences because of sickness increased so rapidly that a new rule was made specifying that doctors' certificates for absence from work could no longer be signed by private physicians. In the future they would have to carry the signature of a factory or a state physician. The quality of the medical care the workers get from factory doctors is evident from a report that appeared in the Berliner Boersenzeitung praising the "efficiency" of these men. "One such physician handled 25,000 cases in a single year!"

The new workers come from the most poorly nourished stratum of German society, the 40 percent of "normal consumers" who get no supplements to their basic rations. German rations are, of course, much higher than those in the occupied and vassal countries. From a simple comparison of ration quantities, it is often assumed that the food situation in Germany is about the same as in Britain. But the quality of the food and also the possibilities of compensating for restricted foods play an important role in every rationing system. The scarcity of unrationed foods in Germany makes the feeding of a family an aggravating as well as a full-time job. In the larger cities, housewives often begin forming lines at one or two o'clock in the morning to wait until eight o'clock, when the shops open. Meanwhile, rationing is becoming more severe. As of June 1, the meat ration was again cut. The explanation offered to the public was that the amount of livestock in the country had to be reconciled with the available fodder. The normal consumer now gets five pounds of bread, nine ounces of meat, seven ounces of fat, eight ounces of sugar and nine pounds of potatoes each week. Heavy workers are allowed considerably more bread, meat and fat. However, the quality of the food is so poor that the newspapers frequently print articles attempting to prove that it is edible. For example, the author of one article insisted that the bread (made primarily of ersatz flour) was not harmful to the health, that it was only necessary to put it aside for a few days to let it dry out before eating.

The complete German bill of fare would probably include the items listed below:

Breakfast: Coffee substitute, bread with jam or artificial honey, cake on Sundays.

Lunch: Sandwiches with a thin spread of butter or margarine; cheese twice a week, sausage once a week. If other spreads are not available, mustard or jam may be substituted. One egg a month; sometimes hominy grits or oatmeal (cooked in water, as only young children get milk); in summer, radishes or tomatoes. For a beverage, coffee substitute, cocoa substitute or thin beer.

Dinner: Meat and potatoes twice a week; noodles or groats with gravy once a week. On the other days, a mixture of potatoes and red or white cabbage or turnips. In winter occasionally dried peas or beans; in summer fresh vegetables or salad, and on Sunday an I. G. Farben pudding.

No one starves on such a diet, but everyone complains.

Much more difficult is the problem of obtaining clothing and the simplest articles of daily use. The fourth clothing ration card introduced in January provided for 30 percent less than the already curtailed third ration card. It entitles the holder to exactly one kilogram (about two pounds) of textiles per year, but if he should want to buy a coat, or a suit, or a pair of shoes, he needs not only points but a special permit. Such a permit is issued only on surrender of the old article to be replaced, which must then be certified as beyond repair. Dropping a pocket handkerchief carelessly these days is an irreparable loss.

According to the official index, the cost of living has increased only a very little. But even Nazi sources point out that the index has not gone up more because such a large proportion of the average family's budget goes for the purchase of goods whose prices are stabilized. In other words, the fact that the price of shirts or stockings is away up does not influence the total cost of living of a family very much because it can buy so few of these articles. It is quite true that, in gen-

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eral, the prices of food have remained stable, but that is by no means the case with other articles of daily use. For example, a cheap rayon dress which would have cost ten marks before the war now costs fifty or sixty marks (an increase from $4 to $20 or $25).

What really has been stabilized is wages, which remain at the depression level of 1932. According to official statistics, hourly wages today are 14.5 percent lower than they were in 1928. These figures apply to gross wages before the increased deductions, which now amount to 20 or 25 percent. The average hourly wage of a skilled male worker is 32 cents, of an unskilled worker, 26 cents. Hourly wages for women workers are between 18 and 21 cents. Extra overtime pay amounting to 25 percent is paid only after ten hours of work. It is scarcely possible to maintain the familiar legend of Nazi Germany's high wages in the face of these figures from official sources.

Despite draconian punishments, there is still a black market in Germany. Its clientele is certainly more limited than was that of the black market in the last war, when almost every city dweller knew a farmer from whom he could get a pound of this or that on the side. This time the controls are too strict and the punishments too severe to make it worth while for the little man. Black-marketing is carried out on a big-business scale by the great landowners, by war profiteers and by high Nazi officials. It is impossible to exaggerate the extent of their corruption. From the high SS officers in the occupied countries to the high officials in the state distribution agencies, and from the chiefs of the Reich Farm Estate to the men who direct the canteens in large factories and camps, there are systems of underground communications through which pass food and other goods, not by the pound but by the carload.

In addition to the black market there is also the black bourse. But only a few of the chosen have been able to put the fortunes they have plundered during the last few years in a "safe place" abroad. Fantastically high prices are paid for American dollars; even French francs bring a good price because it is easier to get dollars with francs than with marks. Precious stones sell for many times the prices paid for them in Switzerland. There is probably nothing that the average German fears more than a repetition of inflation, and everyone who can get rid of his paper marks does so—which means, mostly, the new "plutocracy." It is the members of this group that are the only people in Germany who still talk about victory and they are first to make preparations for the inevitable defeat.

The little man's only use for his left-over marks is to pay his admission to the movies or the theatre. Just two years ago there were many reports of a great increase in the consumption of alcohol in Germany. That is all over now. Wine and schnapps are to be had only on the black market; beer is very thin and hard to get. In order to get the two or three cigarettes a day—made out of heaven knows what—to which a German is entitled he has to stand in line for hours. The lack of tobacco and other such luxuries led, for a time, to mass consumption of drugs of all kinds, especially sleeping tablets and stimulants. Now the authorities have barred that too.

Even escape into the world of literature is made difficult. It is almost impossible to get books from pre-Hitler days. Books are a traditional Christmas present in Germany, but last year only soldiers and heavy workers could have them. Of the new titles published, few are about the war; historical novels and a species of literature that might be called soap opera with a blood-and-soil ideology, make up almost all the new publications.

Ever since Hitler took power there has been in Germany a phenomenon which may be described as an "internal emigration." Little groups of intellectuals have tried to keep away from everything the Nazis stand for, to confine themselves to a restricted and congenial circle and to maintain their intellectual freedom within that circle. The Nazis are, of course, opposed to anyone who is not first of all concerned with the party and state. Recently, the official Weltliteratur published a tirade against nonconformist, or rather non-participant, intellectuals. The occasion was a review of a new book, "Humanism as a Force." Apparently it has no relation to the political and historical realities of the Reich and so is of no value. The magazine also complained about the works of a number of modern writers and poets, including Stefan George, Rainer Maria Rilke, Ernest Wiechert and Ernst Juenger. The books of these authors are not forbidden, but, according to Weltliteratur, they are "undesirable." Apparently they are very widely read.

For a long time "morale" has been the Propaganda Ministry's chief concern—that, and the combating of rumors. From Goebbels' definitive articles in Das Reich to the editorials in the tiniest provincial journal, every ounce of propaganda energy in the Third Reich is enlisted in the fight to improve morale and combat rumor. It is not just a question of answering "enemy propaganda"—though the Nazis have had to admit quite openly that this is a problem too. Their more important task is to overcome the wave of apathy and pessimism, of insecurity and doubt, that has engulfed the German people of almost every class. The intensity of the official campaign shows that the Nazis fully realize the danger of the decline in morale and the seriousness of the tendency immediately to accept as true every rumor hostile to the regime. These not only cripple total mobilization but they undermine the will to defense on which the Nazis must depend in the grave battle that lies ahead. Against sentiments that are so widespread the Nazis' old weapon, terror, is not enough. Nevertheless, the number of death sentences proves that terror inside Germany is also increasing.

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The rulers of Germany got a real shock when they discovered the "student plot" in Munich and other German universities. So far it has been announced that seventeen of the plotters were sentenced to death and many others to long terms of imprisonment. This trial has received more attention in the press, on the radio and even in public meetings than any other political trial in the Third Reich in the last few years. The students were accused of creating an anti-nationalist organization, of putting on anti-war demonstrations, of printing and distributing leaflets calling for the end of the war and the overthrow of the regime, as well as attempting to organize sabotage in war industries. The Gestapo ordered that during the summer vacation there should be a thorough cleansing of the universities of the "criminal elements" who are hiding in them. They are hiding in the same universities which the Nazis once, quite justly, claimed to be their bulwarks of strength. These so-called "criminal elements" belong to the generation which was ten or twelve years old when the "National Revolution" took place in Germany. They belong to the generation which the Nazis have educated and of whom they have felt absolutely certain. So, today, the Nazis have to hand over to the executioner the very boys who were intended to be the elite of the master race. VERA FRANKE

Who's Behind the Farm Bureau?

THE DISTRICT AGENT swung through town with word from the state director of the Agricultural Extension Service that the Farm Bureau was ready to give Farm Security the works in Washington and wanted grass-roots support.[1] The House Appropriations Committee was all lined up, but the pressure had to be put on every Senator and every Representative. If the campaign succeeded, Extension would take over the FSA. "Get your Farm Bureau to raise hell about the FSA program in your county," the district agent said. So the county agent called an emergency meeting of his Farm Bureau board—the judge of probate, the banker, the furnish merchant and the Yankee manager of the insurance company's plantations.

The probate judge, richest man in the county by virtue of the fee system which put money in his pocket every time a landlord took out a lien on a sharecropper's cotton, was convinced that the Farm Security Administration was headed hell-bent for communism. So was the banker, whose vault contained mortgage deeds on half the good land in the county. The furnish merchant, who kept people's tenants alive through the season on doles of salt meat and meal, said the FSA was ruining the hands—getting them to mess around with gardens, chickens, cows and hogs when they oughtn't to be studying about anything but cotton. This was cotton country: always had been, always would be.[2]

The Yankee manager of the insurance company's plantations went along with the rest. What he had against the FSA was this labor-stealing. Hadn't they taken one of his best tenants and put him on a little farm of his own—loaded the poor Negro up with a debt he would have to be paying on for the next forty years? And put electric lights in the Negro's house, too. The probate judge said the worst thing of all was the FSA loaning its white borrowers money to pay their poll taxes. If that wasn't unconstitutional, what was? Next thing you knew, they would be encouraging Negroes to try to vote. Yes, the thing had to be stopped before there was bloodshed.

So the Farm Bureau had a free barbecue down at the American Legion hut on the riverbank. A couple of hundred landlords from all over the country were there and when they were feeling mellow from liquor and plenty of pork with the wood taste in it, the county agent made them a speech about how there had to be a stop put to the FSA, no two ways about it. He was a safe man, they all knew, never mixed up in this New Deal stuff and a big politicker for the Governor's machine. If you were on the right side of him he could help you plenty—get your cotton allotment raised and still see you pulled down a nice soil-conservation check every year.

After the county agent talked about the menace of the FSA, the probate judge, the banker, the furnish merchant and the Yankee manager of the insurance company reiterated their points. When they had finished, the county agent read a resolution which he proposed their passing and sending to the state headquarters of the Extension Service. The resolution said the ordinary farmers of the county were up in arms over the FSA's extravagance and communism and they wanted the program either stopped or turned over to the Extension Service to run. None of the landlords objecting, the resolution was passed by acclamation. Then they all had a couple more drinks on the Farm Bureau and climbed into their cars to drive home.

That is how "the Farm Bureau-Extension axis," as Jim Patton of the National Farmers' Union calls it, actually works on the county level. In eleven states the Farm Bureau—a private organization of farmers

[1] This picture is a composite drawn from numerous experiences of the author. The statements attributed to the characters are seldom denied by such persons, but are instead stoutly maintained, publicly and privately, as the only just and rational attitudes. – J. B.

[2] The Farm Security Administration lends money to poor farmers for seed, fertilizer, equipment, livestock. It also makes loans to capable sharecroppers, tenants and farm laborers for purchase of small farms of their own. It advocates, and gives technical supervision in regard to, diversification of crops. – J. B.

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—and the Agricultural Extension Service—a public agency supported by federal, state and county funds—are joined by law. In most of the rest the union of the two, though not sanctioned by state enactment, is on what might be termed a common-law basis. Most farmers are under the impression that the two are one and the same. County farm and home agents have Farm Bureau signs on their office doors. They have been caught sending out announcements of Farm Bureau organizational meetings on franked government cards. While on the public payroll, these agents customarily devote a large part of their time to organizing activities for the Farm Bureau. Farmers are dragooned into joining the Farm Bureau by outright deceit. Not otherwise, they are widely led to believe, may they claim the services of the county farm and home agents, receive publicly printed pamphlets of the Agriculture Department or be entitled to benefit payments.[1] By such means the Farm Bureau has built up a membership of 600,000 farmers, though it has been repeatedly exposed as a company union of the most cynical character, maintaining close liaison with the National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Associated Farmers of California, the National Cotton Council and reactionary groups of even more sinister nature.[2] "I tell farmers if they can't join any of the farm organizations, they should join the Ku Klux Klan." This is Ed O'Neal speaking, national president of the Farm Bureau, before his crony Harry Byrd's Senate Economy Committee. Byrd, it might be footnoted, is America's biggest apple-grower.

Ed O'Neal himself owns a big cotton plantation in the rich Tennessee valley of Alabama, near Muscle Shoals. He refers to his tenants in true ante-bellum style as "*My* Negroes and white folks," picturing them to the House Appropriations Committee recently as a happy, carefree lot. Said he, "I grew up with the Negroes and white boys on my place and you could not run them off. They would not go to Detroit at $15 a day. They are satisfied. . . ." Indeed, they had better be, farm workers having been shackled to the land by draft legislation which Ed O'Neal's Farm Bureau was instrumental in hammering through Congress. According to Old Massa O'Neal, "his" Negroes and white folks have not been seduced by the FSA into thoughts above their station. Far from wanting farms of their own, O'Neal asserts, his tenants tell him "we have found out that through the generations we do better on your land than we would on ours."

"A literal politician," O'Neal frankly describes himself. His guiding idea, though he professes himself a Democrat, is to forge the Corn Belt and the cotton South into a solid political bloc. What has driven him to this conclusion is a simple logic which transcends party lines. Sitting in the House galleries as a Farm Bureau lobbyist year after year since 1923 drove home to O'Neal, by his own confession, the obvious truth that "in the Corn Belt they have got 137 votes [in Congress] and in the South we have got 120—and if we get together on a program, we win, you see."

Consequently it is natural to find a Corn Belter wielding co-equal power with O'Neal in the Farm Bureau itself. This is Vice-President Earl C. Smith, head of the Illinois Farm Bureau, largest of the state units. Smith is a big corn farmer in his own right. He is a lifelong Republican and an immensely influential politician in his own state as well as nationally. One of his most recent triumphs, achieved jointly with Colonel McCormick of The Chicago Tribune, was shoving isolationist Senator "Curly" Brooks back down the people's throats. Brooks, needless to say, goes down the line for the Farm Bureau in the Senate.

Another Farm Bureau figure who deserves attention, though he poses as an humble member of the Washington County, Mississippi, rank and file, is Oscar Johnston, manager and part-owner, with absentee British and Dutch interests, of the world's largest cotton holdings—embracing 52,000 acres of fertile Delta land and utilizing the labor of between 1,500 and 2,000 tenant families. Johnston is also president of the National Cotton Council, another big lobbying outfit hooked in with the Farm Bureau by an interlocking-directorate arrangement. The National Cotton Council, Johnston says, is an organization of producers, ginners, warehousemen and spinners. It is actually supported by a tax of 15 cents a bale levied against all cotton farmers, big and little, The Coöperative Leader recently charged. How some of this money has been diverted to doing a job on the small farmers who helped to contribute it has just come to light.

After storming up and down the land making loose speeches at Farm Bureau and other gatherings in which he denounced the FSA for extravagance and communism, Johnston was called publicly to account for his malicious charges by A. D. Stewart, FSA regional director for Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana. The FSA records showed, Stewart pitilessly revealed, that in 1938 Johnston was eager to help the FSA establish "communism" by selling off 4,000 acres of his cotton realm for the development of a farm community at a price to the government of $100 an acre. Appraisal showing the land to be worth no more than $30 an

[1] The Extension Service, which receives funds not only from the Department of Agriculture but also from county and state governments, is an educational agency. Among other services, its county agents distribute technical literature published by the Department's Agricultural Research Administration. This same material is also, of course, available through the mails. The State Director of Extension is a member of the AAA State Committee in each state. These committees administer the commodity-loan and crop-insurance programs of the AAA. – J. B.

[2] The Farm Bureau and these organizations espouse an identical program. They have all been against firm price control, against subsidies, against the closed and union shop, and for the extension of the work week with overtime eliminated. The farm organizations do not attack high wartime profits, and the industrial organizations do not attack high food prices. They both, however, attack labor.

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acre, the "extravagant" FSA declined Johnston's tender. Rocked back on his heels by Stewart's devastating rebuttal, Johnston put a sleuth, with the assignment of digging up evidence to support the charges he had been tossing around, on the National Cotton Council's payroll. The National Union Farmer recently printed a facsimile of a letter which reveals the outrageous cynicism of this investigation. Sent out by the office manager of the Delta Council in February, the letter is addressed to all directors of the council:

> Mr. L. T. Stone, Field Representative for the National Cotton Council, is now in the Delta, working with the Delta Council on a survey of Farm Security Administration projects. National Cotton Council, through this survey, seeks to charge FSA with mismanagement, waste of funds, decreased production and communistic tendencies, with a view to curtailing sharply the scope of this agency.
>
> Mr. Stone has asked that I write you, requesting that you file with this office a letter setting forth your personal opinions concerning FSA and any concrete examples that you know of, which would substantiate the charges National Cotton Council seeks to make against FSA. Mr. Stone is also interested in any general rumors concerning projects in your vicinity. . . .

The results of this rumor-chase were incorporated in Johnston's testimony before the agricultural subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, which was out to do—and has done—a job on the FSA. Nevertheless, the subcommittee chairman, Representative Malcolm Tarver of Georgia, was impelled to rebuke Johnston at one point in his testimony for endeavoring to introduce hearsay as evidence. Johnston's charges were completely exploded by C. B. Baldwin, the Farm Security Administrator, when he had his innings, but the Farm Bureau stooges who made up the subcommittee majority were set to rub out the FSA before testimony was ever taken. Though Tarver showed some guarded sympathy for the FSA, the Farm Bureau gang—Representatives Dirksen of Illinois, Lambertson of Kansas and Cannon of Missouri—were known and implacable enemies of the agency.

The agriculture-appropriations bill for 1944, as it came out of committee, provided for the partitioning of the FSA between the Farm Credit Administration and the Extension Service. This and other features such as the bottling up of government credit for farmers at the behest of the bankers, the scuttling of federal crop insurance, the reduction of funds for the democratically elected AAA county committees, moved the National Farmers' Union to term the measure "the agricultural misappropriations bill." President James Patton of the NFU has charged that its passage "would . . . represent a complete victory for the combination of bankers, absentee landlords and big planters who have been trying since 1940 to remove all authority to help farmers from an administration they do not yet control and to place the farm programs in the hands of their own agents operating through local and state governments." That the bill was actually written by the Farm Bureau is indubitable. "I am frank to say," Chairman Tarver admitted with bitterness, "that the Farm Bureau Federation, with regard to some of these more controversial items, has been all-powerful in the consideration of the pending bill." Since then the Senate has voted to keep the FSA, and at this writing it remains to be seen whether the House will be able to get its way in the conference committee.

Back in 1930, the Farm Bureau was shown by a Senate investigation to be involved with the American Cyanamid Company and the Union Carbide Company in an attempt to block Senator Norris' plan for government production of cheap fertilizer at Muscle Shoals. Testimony indicated that neighbor Ed O'Neal, then president of the Alabama Farm Bureau, was particularly active on behalf of the corporations that wanted to sew up the government development for themselves. On the stand the Farm Bureau spokesman, Chester Gray, said he was opposed to the Norris cheap-fertilizer plan because it represented "a gift . . . a dole . . . a pension" to farmers. Yet very soon afterwards another Senate investigation disclosed that the Farm Bureau had made a desperate play to fish a $94,000 fund out of the American Ship Owners' Association in exchange for throwing the Farm Bureau's propaganda resources into the battle for ship subsidies.

From the beginning—as Dale Kramer has shown in his excellent pamphlet, "Truth About the Farm Bureau"—the outfit has exhibited telltale signs of being kept. The first Farm Bureau was set up by the Chamber of Commerce in the notorious company town of Binghampton, New York. Railroads chipped in to support the promising company union for farmers, as did the Rockefeller Foundation. The Chicago Board of Trade gave a birthday present of $1,000 to each of the first hundred local Farm Bureaus formed. That this company-union pattern still prevails is beautifully revealed in a news article appearing in The Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser for March 23, 1943. The article also discloses the county agent of the Extension Service in his dual role of Farm Bureau organizer:

> The response of landlords to the Montgomery County Farm Bureau's membership drive has been excellent, Lem A. Edmonson, county farm agent, said last night. . . .
>
> An effort is being made this year to have landlords and farm operators pay dues for themselves, their tenants and their wage hands and sharecroppers, or for all producer units. [The former practice was for county agents to check off Farm Bureau dues from tenants' and sharecroppers' government benefit payments. Now, evidently, landlords will simply charge Farm Bureau dues as "deduc's" against tenants' accounts. – J. B.] Approximately 400 dairymen and farmers have done this, the agent said. The largest number paid for to date was by W. Chappel Gray, who bought membership for 81 tenants.

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Coöperation of the banks of Montgomery is expressed in the fact that the First National paid $50 for 25 memberships for officers and employees and Union Bank and Trust Company paid $8 for four memberships.

Signs are multiplying that farmers are at last getting wise to the Farm Bureau, as Senator Norris in 1930 prophesied they would, saying, "The time will come when the rank and file of American farmers will begin to realize by whom they are being deceived in Washington!" The Ohio and Vermont Farm Bureaus have broken with the national organization on scuttling the FSA. A bill, drafted by farm interests, was introduced at the last session of the New York State Legislature to sever the legal connection between the Farm Bureau and the State Extension Service. The increasingly obvious collusion between the Farm Bureau and reactionary organizations like the NAM in support of anti-labor measures is driving the CIO and the AFL into closer collaboration with progressive farm groups like the National Farmers' Union. The reactionary extremism of the Farm Bureau may very well be creating the necessary conditions for farmer-labor unity through knocking out the FSA and other stop-gap alternatives.

From this awakening to common interests a new and better breed of "literal politicians" may arise at the war's end to beat Ed O'Neal hollow at his own game.

JOHN BEECHER

Britain Does It Better

With the exception of a few individuals whom I know and like, I waste no love on the English. I have never been so ill at ease in any country in the world as I have in England, never felt so severely ignored. Whether from snobbishness or from shyness, the average Englishman, both at home and abroad, seems not to want to enlarge his acquaintance and seldom troubles to dissemble. I am not the only American who has felt intensely lonely in England and who has been firmly rebuffed by English tourists on the Continent. Nor can I be the only American who, on visiting England, has felt a warm sympathy for those of his ancestors who lost no time in taking the first boat out.

If only because it is too neat and too compact a land, with too much tweed and too many cocker spaniels in too confined a space, England must inevitably strike the average American, used to our vast open spaces, the sprawling disorder of our countryside and the hasty, temporary look of our towns and even many of our cities, as an oppressively tidy, fixed and finished place, whose inhabitants must necessarily be intent more on preserving and perfecting what they have than on tearing it down and starting afresh, in the larger and more restless tradition of America.

Yet there is something in the British character that, despite all my prejudices, I cannot help admiring—a doggedness, a directness, a tenacity, a courage and faith in the presence of overwhelming adversity and imminent disaster, which are the qualities of a truly great people. I lived in France for more than a year after the defeat, and like millions of Europeans, I followed with bated breath the daily progress of the Battle of Britain and the campaigns in Greece, Ethiopia and Libya, knowing that the future of free men everywhere depended to a terrifying degree on those very qualities. I think I shall never forget, and I hope that others will never forget, the heavy debt we all owe to Britain.

And now I have to admit that in less heroic ways also, Britain has distinguished herself by her conduct in this war. Temporizing as we are with the problems of taxation and inflation, we Americans can learn much from the British example—and shall have to, if we are not to fall victim to the rising spiral of prices and wages.

Britain, too, had a period of runaway prices at the beginning of the war: by April, 1941, her general cost-of-living index had risen 28 percent, and with it had gone the inevitable demands for increased wages. But in April, 1941, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the government had decided to prevent any further rise in the cost of living. And the amazing fact is that it succeeded. Whereas the cost-of-living index had risen about one and one-half percent per month during the first nineteen months of the war, it advanced only one percent more during the entire second nineteen months, and is still being held within one percent of what it was when the stabilization policy was first introduced. In the United States, on the other hand, cost of living is almost 25 percent above what it was in January, 1941, and is still going up.

The astonishing success of the British stabilization program has been achieved in a number of ways. For one thing, price control, already in effect for food, was extended to include transportation, fuel and "other articles in common use."

To offset losses which the policy of fixing prices might otherwise have imposed on producers and distributors, subsidies, previously paid on a limited number of foodstuffs, were now extended to cover twelve basic food products and the transportation cost on these products. At the present time, the subsidy program is costing the British Exchequer about $720,000,000 a year. But by assuring the lowest income groups an adequate supply of food at fair prices, it has repaid its cost many times over. In some cases, food prices have actually declined since the subsidy program was extended.

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Southern State Normal School Library
Springfield, S. Dak.

But price fixing and the paying of subsidies are not the only weapons Britain has used in fighting inflationary tendencies. She has also resorted to very heavy taxation, both of private incomes and of nonessential goods. It is Britain's policy to meet as large a part as possible of her war expenditures by taxation. Since the war began, Britain has paid 44 percent of her total expenditures out of current revenue. The figure was 36 percent in 1940 and had risen to 46 percent by 1942. It will be even higher in 1943.

The standard income-tax rate in Britain today is 50 percent. (Because of differences in exemptions and deductions, comparison is difficult, but the fact is not without significance that even under the new law the basic rate in the United States is only 20 percent.) Surtaxes on the higher incomes bring the British rate up to a maximum of 97½ percent, and deductions and allowances have been so reduced that the maximum tax-free income for a single person in Britain is as low as $440. There is no limit on maximum income, but opponents of President Roosevelt's efforts to limit incomes of Americans to $25,000 a year may be interested to know that Britain's wartime income tax has reduced the number of British subjects with net incomes of more than $24,000 from 7,000 to 80. Eighty-five percent of the nation's net purchasing power is today in the hands of those earning less than $2,000 a year.

In addition to income taxes, there are now sales taxes on all nonessential goods. The rate varies from 16⅔ percent to 100 percent, the latter being the rate on "luxuries," including jewelry, silk goods, leather articles and furs. These high sales taxes not merely provide the government with an additional source of revenue but also discourage unnecessary purchases.

If the manufacture and sale of nonessential goods is discouraged and in some cases actually forbidden outright, the provision of an adequate supply of essential goods other than food is assured by the so-called "utility" production. "Utility" goods, or as they are familiarly called, "austerity" goods, include shoes and clothing, furniture and bedding, kitchen ware, pottery and cutlery, pencils, mechanical lighters, perambulators and hearth furniture. They are all made in the simplest possible way, with price control all along the line, and there is no sales tax on them. In some lines, only utility goods may be produced, while in others both utility and non-utility production is allowed. But the non-utility goods are heavily taxed. Thus whereas there is no tax on a utility suit, the tax on a tailor-made suit is one-third of the retail price.

With taxes so high, one might suppose that the British people would have little left for the purchase of war bonds and certificates. Yet actually here, too, they have done better than we have. By the end of March, 1943, the government had taken in more than twenty-one billion dollars in war savings, or an average of $456 for every man, woman and child in the United Kingdom. In the United States, the per-capita investment in war bonds and stamps is $133. Of course, the British have had longer to go; but on the other hand we are far richer than they.

The impact of these various taxes creates a situation which is in striking contrast to that in the United States: whereas in the United States, taxes will absorb about 25 percent of the national income in the fiscal year 1942-43, in the United Kingdom they will absorb about 37 percent. Because our per-capita wealth is so much greater, we ought to be able to siphon off an even larger part of our national income in taxes than do the British. Yet we are actually siphoning off very considerably less. What is left in Britain is not enough to create an inflationary threat. What is left here has already created an alarming degree of inflation.

Incidentally, contrary to the current notion here, Britain has not adopted the pay-as-you-go tax system. It was considered, but was dropped after workers and employers alike agreed that there were too many difficulties in the way of applying it. Salary and wage-earners in Britain do have their taxes deducted at the source, but on the basis of the previous year's income, not on the current year's. Special provisions are made to avoid hardship where current income is less than the income of the previous year.

Despite the successful stabilization of the cost-of-living index, wage rates in Britain have continued to rise. By the end of last year, the wage rates of all occupations except agriculture had risen to a point about 33⅓ percent above pre-war levels, as against the increase of 28 percent in the cost-of-living index. By July, 1942, actual earnings had risen 60 percent above the pre-war figure.

The contrast in economic practices in Britain and America in wartime is illustrated by a table published in the May 1 issue of The (London) Economist. It is a table showing the growth and distribution of the gross national income in the United States and Britain between 1938 and 1943. The figures show how much of income has been devoted to civilian consumption, how much to government expenditures (*i. e.*, to war) and how much to the maintenance and increase of capital.

		Distribution of the Gross National Income		
United States	*Gross National Income*	*Civilian Consumption*	*Government Expenditure*	*Maintenance and Increase of Capital*
1939	100	70.4	17.1	12.5
1942	151.2	79.1	63.6	8.5
Britain				
1938	100	72.2	15.1	12.7
1942	114	61	63.5	− 4.5

Notice that the two governments have increased their own expenditures about equally: 46.5 points in the case of the United States and 48.4 points in Britain's case. But whereas we have achieved the result largely by

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increasing production (51.2 points) and have reduced our provision for capital maintenance only 4 points and have actually increased our consumption by 8.7 points, Britain has increased her total production 14 points, and has reduced consumption 11.2 points and provision for capital maintenance 17.2 points (*i.e.*, she has actually de-vested). In other words, Britain, already nearer peak production before the war than we, has had to tighten her belt, whereas we are still living on our fat.

This is not to say that Britain has solved all her economic problems by any means. There is still widespread poverty, as indeed there is bound to be so long as such a large part of the national effort goes into the making of war materials. Though they are not by any means so spectacular as they were, vast differences in the living standards of the rich and the poor still exist. Despite full employment and overtime pay, Britain's lowest-paid workers are still unable to save any part of their incomes. Britain is still far from the ideal of the social democracy.

But it is to say that by Spartan methods, Britain has overcome the threat of inflation, stabilized living costs and very nearly stabilized wage rates.

It is to say that, as in the great things, so in the small, Britain has shown the world how to fight a total war. We Americans can learn much from her example.

VARIAN FRY

Bricker of Ohio

GOV. JOHN WILLIAM BRICKER of Ohio is not a political phenomenon. He's a genial handshaker, gifted in the art of avoiding issues and uncanny in the knack of making friends without influencing people. If he wins the Republican nomination for President and is elected, he won't be the first chief executive who has stepped into the White House on a platform of cobwebs, but he may be the last. In this dynamic world, he is like a country boy in a big city of forces he doesn't understand. His political philosophy is contemporaneous with the hoopskirt and the high-wheel bicycle. "Honest John" they call him, and the name fits him well, for he is honest and sincere—but that won't help him if some of his more sinister bedfellows boot him out into the modern international scramble.

Those interested in politics know what he stands for. He believes in American individualism, help for business, decreased costs in government, states' rights, more interest in local government, labor unions with greater responsibility to membership, and higher taxes, if necessary, to balance the budget. This has been sound Republican doctrine since, say, 1904. Also, he is for almost anything that will be for him. He admits he would be glad of the support of McCormick's Chicago Tribune, of Pew and the duPonts, Hoover, the National Association of Manufacturers, farmers, Negroes and the women. On post-war international problems he is noncommittal.

Many people remember him as the farm boy who worked his way through Ohio State University, caught on the baseball team, was an ordinary student, had a big hello for everybody, was well liked, served as chaplain in the army in the First World War, practised law, offended nobody, made friends and became a politician. He has now been elected Governor of Ohio three times running; he has balanced the budget and has a surplus of $45,000,000 in the treasury.

All this is pretty much a matter of record. But his career as Governor, on which he is basing his political future, is not wholly a matter of great achievements. True, when he first became Governor the state was $20,000,000 in debt. But he got it out of debt by having enacted into law a three-percent sales tax. This hit the purse of every citizen—but it worked. It was foolproof under the circumstances, for the national income was rising and when the war boom struck the nation it was certain there would be a surplus. All the Governor had to do was sit tight and smile while the money rolled in.

Much has been made of Governor Bricker's economy measures. His backers say proudly that he discharged 4,000 state employees the first day he was in office. That was supposed to be an example of economy. Nevertheless the cost of state government has risen constantly since he has been in office. His latest budget was $375,723,921, some twenty-three millions more than it was the year before. It was slightly higher than that of New York State, which has nearly twice the population. Hence the per-capita cost of government in Ohio is nearly twice what it is in New York. Is that economy? This is significant when it is remembered that most states having a surplus have reduced their budgets in recent years.

But look what he has done for the state, his backers say triumphantly. He has maintained the state's social-security program, increased old-age pensions, raised school teachers' salaries and pensions, liberalized the state's unemployment-compensation act, planned to aid returning soldiers and appropriated funds to assist agricultural experiments. Although none of these improvements originated with him, he helped see them through.

"Honest John" Bricker's shortcomings are, perhaps, best illustrated by his singular indifference to the plight

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of the feeble-minded in Ohio. If conditions are worse in any other state in the union, then the fact must be a well kept secret. Ohio has three institutions for the feeble-minded. "The Institute" is in Columbus. Its ancient buildings were erected before the gay nineties. Some 2,000 inmates are jam-packed inside. They sleep two in a bed—if they can find a bed. The other institutions at Orient and Apple Creek are just as crowded. But even more significant is the fact that no new inmates can be admitted until one dies or leaves. Since this situation exists, many feeble-minded must either be cared for at home or left free to roam the streets. At one time the Probate Court of Cuyahoga County alone had 400 feeble-minded persons it wished to send to an institution, but was unable to do so because of limited facilities. Cleveland had some one hundred "fire-bug" blazes within a short time. There might be some connection.

Another drawback to Bricker's economies is pointed out by war workers, many of whom complain that they are forced to remain at home to care for their children. But the Governor has not acted. He has kept the surplus intact.

Nor has Governor Bricker interfered in the muddled liquor situation in Ohio. Long queues of citizens often waited hours while favored characters entered back doors of state-owned stores and bought liquor by the case. This was proved. Meanwhile the Governor was displaying his political astuteness by occasionally taking one drink and sipping it reluctantly. Thus he showed that he didn't fully approve of liquor. This satisfied the drys, but it also satisfied the wets, who were made aware that he wasn't a teetotaler. Since Ohio, despite its surplus, has not been favored by the distillers, the liquor supply is short. Ohioans have become bootleggers.

Bricker has eliminated graft. But he "farmed out" the issuing of automobile licenses to Republican regulars. These private individuals issued licenses for an extra fee of 25 cents each. There are 500,000 car-owners in Cuyahoga County alone. It wasn't graft, but it was "big money" for the favored few.

The Governor's relations with the last legislature were revealing. When it convened on January 11, 1943, he recommended scores of measures. Few were enacted. One, repeal of the tax on food, was rejected. The legislators debated some five or six weeks the controversial change-of-time bill, which would set Ohio back on Standard Time. Bricker did not interfere. When questioned, he said it was their business, not his. It was expected that, since he was Governor, Bricker would take a stand. But of course he didn't, for he isn't that kind of man. Eventually the bill was passed and signed by him, despite the protests of many cities. Through their representatives, the cities claimed, and apparently with justice, that War Time was better, at least in the summer, than the Standard Time established by the bill. However, once the bill was passed, the official time for Ohio was one hour slower than the national official time established by President Roosevelt. Many cities ignored the bill and remained on War Time. Ohio has both Standard and War Time now. The confusion is eloquent.

Political observers in Ohio still insist that the time-change controversy proved that Mr. Bricker lacks the political astuteness accredited to him. The measure was obviously designed as a slap at the New Deal. If it had been enacted into law in the fall, most of the voters would have approved. But when it became a law this spring many resented it, largely because the advantages of daylight saving are admitted in the summer months.

Has Mr. Bricker native country shrewdness, despite his obvious lack of brilliance? I quote verbatim from remarks made by a Columbus citizen who has known and liked him all his life:

> John Bricker is a likable fellow. He makes friends easily and keeps them. The fact that he has straddled the fence most of his life and has refused to take a stand on most issues is explained by some as evidence that he is close-mouthed like Calvin Coolidge. However, in my opinion, no human being with an intelligent outlook on affairs could live as long as he has lived without being moved to express opinions. I don't believe it is a pose with John Bricker. Frankly, I don't believe he has opinions.

Although his hatred of the New Deal is his outstanding political characteristic, Governor Bricker has always generalized his criticisms of it. Many have retained the impression that he brackets beating the New Deal and the Axis as prime objectives of all good Republicans. Last fall his generalizations about alleged New Deal chicaneries enabled him to defeat John McSweeney, New Dealer, by a whopping majority. Few noted that McSweeney was without doubt the weakest candidate to run for Governor in twenty years.

John William Bricker has a charming wife, a frank, handsome face, few enemies, old-line Republican backing, loyal friends, a gold American Legion button on his coat lapel, few forthright opinions and a pleasing double chin. William Allen White, who called him an honest Harding, wasn't far wrong. With stronger men in the GOP, he appears to be vice-presidential timber—of the Throttlebottom variety. POTOMACUS

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Washington Notes

Farm-Bloc Politics

THE CURRENT and prospective food shortage has in it the elements of a major political crisis. There is nothing fictitious about the shortage. Freak spring weather has knocked out a variety of crops over a wide area. Some of these crops had been depended upon to offset an anticipated scarcity of meat. There is, of course, no danger of famine, or anything approaching it, or of any serious curtailment of food shipments to our soldiers and their allies. What will be required is a general tightening of the national belt and a good deal of patience.

The political dynamite lies not in the consumer's discomfort but in the producer's ambition to profit from that discomfort. It was all right for the government to tamper with the law of supply and demand during the era of depression surpluses, when the effect of government intervention was to raise prices. It is quite another thing for the government to frustrate the law of supply and demand in a period of scarcity, when a free market would yield a magnificent reward.

The intensity of the producer's resentment is responsible for the present outcry in Congress against the Office of Price Administration and its policy of rolling back prices by resort to subsidy. Even though the subsidies come out of the taxpayer's pocket and end up in the producer's, the producer and his Washington spokesman don't want them. The farmer and his mouthpiece well know that they can do better in the long run by getting rid of the subsidy and wriggling out from under what they consider overly tight regulation than they can by fighting for higher subsidies. Yet they confuse some consumers by making it appear that, as ideological individualists, they can't in good conscience accept handouts from the general taxpayer. They also persuade some with the argument, only slightly less meretricious, that the way to handle the food problem is to let prices seek their natural level, thus encouraging greater production, and so, eventually, bring prices down. They muddy the waters further with statements that appointment of a "food tsar," with centralized authority over prices and rationing, would solve everything.

All this obfuscation is a tribute to the potential political power of the consumer. The farm bloc well knows that consumers, if they thought of themselves primarily as consumers rather than as sellers of goods and services, would have tremendous power. This is a giant that never has been aroused and the farm bloc sings him these little lullabys to keep him asleep. Due to prodding from Don Montgomery and others working with organized labor, the giant has stirred a little lately. This stirring makes the farm lobbyists uncomfortable. It might not be wise right now to say frankly that the farm bloc wants less agricultural price regulation or, better yet, none at all, because a combination of war demand and bad weather has created a golden opportunity for a clean-up. Even an argument on the adequacy of present farm prices, in which the farmers would have a case of sorts, might be dangerous at a time when many people are thinking of food and its cost.

One thing is certain: either by indirection or by frontal attack, the farm bloc will keep up its fight for modification or complete abolition of farm price controls. If its assault on the OPA fails, it will try something else. It is frantic with the knowledge of opportunities missed and with annoyance at the administration for insisting upon holding the price line, or even rolling it back. The President realizes that he must hold farm prices—that the alternative will be a general outbreak of strikes like John L. Lewis', relaxation of retail and wholesale prices all along the line and chaos on the home front. Recently he has explained this patiently and almost imploringly to farm-bloc leaders who have called on him. He has listened in his turn to long lectures on the sacred American right of the farmer to make enough out of his present opportunity to send his sons to college and to pay off the mortgage.

Some of these lectures are delivered in all honesty, but the lecturers are unmoved by the President's answering prediction of economic chaos. They want chaos, although they don't call it that. They want immediate return, even though a war is in process, to free markets where price is determined by no law except supply and demand, where the manufacturer, the wholesaler and the retailer, as well as the farmer, exact all the traffic will bear.

The farm bloc is the biggest and toughest lobby in Congress and can afford to lead this fight. It is willing to do so because its constituents would be the first to benefit. A few of the President's recent callers go all the way: they want labor set free to bargain for higher wages than those allowed under the Little Steel formula. But most of them favor the Smith bill limiting the right to strike and probably would welcome a chance to shackle labor further while setting the farmer and the business man free.

This is the kind of situation out of which political explosions come. There is slight room for compromise. The conflict is not over administrative detail but over fundamentals, even though farm-bloc spokesmen, when talking publicly, try to make it seem otherwise. In a showdown, the farmers could depend on old-line business organizations for support and they might carry this highly excitable Congress.

However, the President is not defenseless. He has the veto power and the radio. He can count upon the natural reluctance of a people at war to make radical changes in its system or, even more, to exchange a system for no system. It is highly improbable that a majority of Americans, if the issue were squarely presented, would vote "yes" to the proposition: shall the New Deal's long effort to achieve some degree of central planning in the interests of the little man be written off as impractical in time of national crisis in favor of return to unregulated markets and simon-pure free enterprise? Yet that is the proposition the farm bloc poses by its advocacy, however dissembled, of restoration of unregulated markets for farm commodities. One of the most disturbing things about the whole situation is that the issue won't wait for the next presidential election and the people will not have a chance to express themselves. The President will have to find some way short of the ballot box of saving Congress from itself and the farm bloc.

Washington T. R. B.

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Columbia Cooler

COLUMBIA STUDIO'S FRESHENER, which annually features Jean Arthur, wholesome comedy and a part of the American scene, is this summer called "The More the Merrier," and is getting frayed at the edges. This product is like an air-conditioner, in that on the hottest day of the year it is better than no conditioner at all. There is a certain foolproof quality about it: each line produces some kind of smile, even if it takes all the smart dialogue writers in Hollywood; the people who play in it are invigorating, and all fitted out to look their handsomest. There is nothing in this formula that is vulgar or unnecessarily trite.

"The More the Merrier" takes place in Washington, D. C., but utilizes few of the farcical possibilities of living there. As a patriotic gesture, Miss Arthur, formerly of the Office of Facts and Figures, rents half her apartment to a housing man, Charles Coburn, who rents half of his half to a propellor man, Joel McCrea, for six dollars. Mr. Coburn does this because, aside from being a millionaire who wants factory workers' houses built closer to factories and a man who says, "Damn the torpedoes—full speed ahead!" over and over again, he is a Cupid.

Anyone who has lived in Washington can tell you it is a joke on the human race (where government buildings are of a hugeness beyond comprehension, like the nebulae; where one stenographer is known to have moved twenty-three times in six weeks in a mistaken search for privacy; where millions enter the city daily, and the city, to accommodate them, has the millions already there move over a little bit—it is beyond the worst anxiety dream of a sardine before reaching its can). In deference to this exaggerated place of habitation, a comedy about it should have been a huge, frenzied belly laugh: but "The More the Merrier" is little more than a smile and much too light treading.

The movie cuts along quickly, at its best, when it is directly concerned with its scene. The apartment Miss Arthur splits with Coburn is four-square and barren in the true Washington interpretation of the Colonial style. Inside it, Miss Arthur, more spinsterish than usual, arranges out of her background of facts and figures a schedule to get both her and Mr. Coburn out of the house by seven-thirty. This ends up, as it deserves to, with Mr. Coburn on the fire escape (newspaper picked up at 7:01 in one hand and the coffee pot, to be put on at 7:03 in the other) begging to be let in again. Next Mr. McCrea appears, with his propellor from California, some bright lines to trade with Coburn, and a nice parody of a man practising the rumba. All of this, though not boisterous, is decidedly not unfunny. After this point the picture starts running contrariwise to its title, slugging poignancy and Miss Arthur to a bad end. This new train of thought is brought on by a need to prove Miss Arthur, who marries McCrea after only two days' acquaintance, truly in love, and not promiscuous.

It is also brought on by the incompatibility of Director George Stevens' real talent with the requirements of farce. His flair is for directing people so that they come out as natural, warm, bright, middle-class Americans, whose lives have tact and poignancy and not too much laughter ("Alice Adams," "Penny Serenade"). It is shown in this picture in his concern for the small, compassionate moments such as the one in which the young man gives Miss Arthur, after she has kicked him out, the hundred-percent-all-leather-double-duty traveling bag, and her legitimate dismay, on returning from her honeymoon, to find she has forgotten to take it. Director Stevens' troubles always arise in a comedy of this sort where his compassion collides, head-on, with slapstick. This gums the last half of the picture with tendernesses that fall flat, and laughs that break wrong.

But inconclusive as "The More the Merrier" is, it has a buoyant quality; it is definitely engaging and not at all a waste of anyone's time.

MANNY FARBER

The Bandwagon

"HAILSTONES-FROM-HEAVEN!"
A Terrific Storm Predicted
Millions of hailstones, weighing more than 50 pounds each, soon to strike this earth with relentless fury.
WILL ATLANTA SURVIVE?
Hear the Clear Bible Answer
—*A Seventh Day Adventist advertisement in The Atlanta Journal.*

In front of a store at 2942 Third Avenue [New York City] a crowd of women proved so eager to get new shoes that they used the ones they had on to trample through still wet concrete on the newly laid sidewalk.—*The last day of Coupon 17 as described in The New York Herald Tribune.*

Brave New World

Any junk jewelry in your home? This question has been put to many [residents of Augusta, Kansas] in the last few days. Victory-corps girls from the high school here are active in gathering up old jewelry, mirrors and compacts to be sent to the South Sea islands. Soldiers will use these articles instead of money in inducing natives to work for them.—*From The Kansas City Times.*

Believe It or Not . . .

Benny Woodall, blond Texan named as a co-respondent in the divorce suit brought by William Harrison (Jack) Dempsey against Mrs. Hannah Williams Dempsey, testified today before Supreme Court Referee J. Addison Young that he was only a family friend of Mrs. Dempsey and was waiting to take a street car home when found barefooted last November 22 with her in a Los Angeles apartment.—*AP dispatch from White Plains, N. Y.*

That All-Out Effort

German scientists working at the Geodetic Institute at Potsdam were reported in the Spanish press today to have discovered that North America is moving away from Europe at the rate of about twelve inches a year.—*From The New York Times.*

Total-War Department

The cavalry horses [of the ROTC unit of the University of Illinois] have been here since 1919. They would have been sold long before this, to make room for mechanized units, except that, when the change was suggested, College of Agriculture men protested. Some of the horses, they said, had a minor disease. If they were sold the contagion would spread over the state. Since then the disease has been cured.—*From The Illinois Alumni News.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping.—THE EDITORS

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Correspondence

The Holden Brothers Hoax

SIR: I would like to correct a serious error in my article, "The Negro Press," in the issue of April 26. The story of the Holden brothers, five Negroes who were supposed to have been killed aboard a United States warship in the Pacific, is a hoax which has been officially denied by the Office of War Information, the Associated Press and The Chicago Defender. I quoted The Defender, which had quoted an Associated Press dispatch. My statement that the navy and the white press had ignored the story therefore introduced a false illustration to show the manner in which Negro achievement is slighted in the white newspapers. With a wealth of authentic incidents available, I regret having included a sensational hoax among the few examples cited.

New York City THOMAS SANCTON

The Argument for "Japan First"

SIR: The purely military arguments for concentrating on Japan first are stronger than The New Republic admits. Given time, the Japanese lack no raw materials to build up a vastly increased war potential; whereas the Germans are already beginning to starve for oil, if nothing else. Japan is almost unhindered in exploiting her resources; Germany suffers severely from sabotage, bombings and the vast attrition of the Russian front. Her morale is slowly sinking, while the Japanese are still ready (and promise to remain so indefinitely) to fight to the last soldier. Thus time favors us in Europe far more than in Asia. . . . If to attack Hitler while holding Japan does not preclude limited offensives in the Pacific (as in Attu), why should attacking Japan while holding Hitler preclude invasion of some Mediterranean islands and/or the tip of Norway, or other spots where ground can be taken and held without a huge army? So "Japan First" need not mean leaving Hitler free to crush Russia or capture the oil of the Near East. He can be kept busy and guessing with the forces now in Britain and Africa plus moderate additions.

In the last war the natural obsession of the French with the fighting on their soil caused millions of casualties, while the soft Balkan side of the enemy was neglected. Today the British and the Russians have a no less natural but militarily dangerous obsession with the German and European aspect of the war. . . . Admittedly, it would be dangerous and unfair to leave Russia to stand alone; but there is no need to go anything like that far. And China's danger and claims are at least as great. We are wasting millions of Chinese soldiers through failure to provide even minimal equipment, whereas Russian armies are operating effectively on a huge scale through material now supplied to them. And if Japan could not conceivably stand alone against Britain, China and this country, neither could Germany (already almost helpless to stop the progressive destruction of her industries and transport from the air) stand alone against Britain, Russia and the United States. And who doubts that China is nearer than Russia to being forced out, or almost out, of the war?

As for the factor of race prejudice, it works both ways. It leads to superstitious fear of the Japanese; but it also leads to a superstitious notion that they are not really competent (were we not going to finish them off in six weeks?). It leads further to the idea that risking loss of effective Chinese aid is secondary, since the Chinese, not being white or Western, cannot really be effective anyhow.

It may be that the European obsession is too strong and has already had its way too long to be set aside now without undue friction and loss of time. And there is a technical argument that while the aircraft we now possess may have perhaps sufficient range for the European theatre, it may be a year or years before we have built range into our planes adequate for efficient action in the Pacific.

In Major Wheeler-Nicholson's "Are We Winning the Hard Way?" the case for a Japan First policy is put on severely rational military grounds. It deserves to be met in the same way, if the matter is to be discussed at all.

CHARLES HARTSHORNE

The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

[Comment on this letter appears in the editorial section.—THE EDITORS]

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Norman Thomas, chairman of the executive committee of the Post War World Council, in New York City, has sent us a copy of a letter, addressed to President Roosevelt, urging him to veto the Connally-Smith bill. The letter points out that ". . . While the bill is avowedly confined to the war emergency, the nature of the propaganda for it reveals a desire for a more permanent regimentation of labor. . . . It will be disastrous to the morale of workers . . . [and] to the degree that the workers may meekly accept this legislation there is danger that totalitarianism will be advanced." The letter bears Mr. Thomas' signature, as well as that of Edith Abbott, Sophonisba P. Breckenridge, Maynard Krueger and many others.

James Waterman Wise, of 17 East Forty-second Street, New York City, is compiling a book of soldiers' letters, and would like our readers to submit such letters to him for possible inclusion.

Margaret Stevens, a student at the University of Michigan, sends us a comment on a letter from her brother, PFC William Stevens, stationed in Australia, an excerpt from which appeared in our May 17 issue. Miss Stevens writes: ". . . America is taking a reactionary turn. . . . We [students] are willing to fight and devote our every effort toward winning the war, but not for a reactionary America. We want to be assured of social, political and economic security for all. That's what we are fighting for."

Mrs. R. L. Armstrong, of Bristol, Tennessee, has sent us a copy of a remarkable speech delivered recently before the local Rotary Club. The speaker, James Mahoney, one of Bristol's leading business men, vice-president of the Washington Trust Bank, called upon capital to recognize its dependence on labor and to fight fascism's attempts to destroy labor movements. The speech had a bombshell effect, writes Mrs. Armstrong.

Elmer T. Weiser, of Fredericksburg, Texas, says that the opinions of H. N. Brailsford regarding the post-war education of the German people [The New Republic, May 10] are "the most comprehensive and sensible" that he has encountered so far. ". . . Mr. Brailsford's ideas, indicating such . . . sympathetic understanding of the feelings and problems of good people in Germany . . . broadcast to those people, should aid in establishing a better world . . . and help in winning the war. . . ."

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Books in Review

Tomorrow the World

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS to be self-evident: that war efforts, war aims and post-war plans form an indivisible whole; that generalities are not enough; and that the time for thoughtful action is now. Hence the enormous output of "reconstruction" books. Men whose judgment I respect single out "The Making of Tomorrow," by Raoul de Roussy de Sales, and "Conditions of Peace," by Edward Hallett Carr, as easily the best. The four I am discussing today are not in that class; but all four deserve respectful attention.

Ely Culbertson shows great courage in offering detailed blueprints for world federation.[1] The sneering objection to blueprints comes from men so hard-headed that they cannot think at all. They would have us believe that you can build a bridge without plans or specifications, by the time-honored, realistic methods of give-and-take, trial-and-error and muddling through. I have combated them all my life, and I should hate to be on their side in this case. I believe *now* is the time for two definite steps: first, a solemn and binding promise that we shall not again desert law for anarchy; and, in the practical field, an Executive Council of the United Nations. If we had such a firm nucleus, all the rest would grow naturally round it: a food conference and a monetary conference have already been called. But the time has not come, and I trust will never come, for such a symmetrical scheme as Culbertson's—so well thought out that, if you were to tamper with any of its parts, the whole would cease to function.

I for one would feel like monkeying with every bit of this fearful and wonderful mechanism. It is a thing of checks and balances: that is to say it is based on the ideas of diffidence and fear. The (potential) American-British combination would be assigned thirty-five capital ships, against Russia's fifteen; but the "Mobile Corps" would more than even up the scale, with its twenty-two ships. Even Talleyrand did not weigh rival powers with a more delicate hand. The subdivision of Europe into several subfederations—a favorite device with peace-planners—seems to me wholly unnatural. "Initiating states" are given excessive prominence. At every turn, the intricate contraption creaks, jolts or stalls.

In spite of his cosmopolitan upbringing, Culbertson is deficient in the true international spirit. He exaggerates—here again he is with the majority—the potency of nationalism. He refuses to realize the obvious fact that every nation, not France and Spain alone, is divided against itself; and that in all countries, including our own, a number of people are in closer harmony with some foreigners than with many of their compatriots. And, in certain details, he yields to the most dangerous tendency in peace-planning: bolstering Anglo-Saxon supremacy. There shall be no peace until that ghost has been finally exorcized.

[1] Summary of the World Federation Plan, by Ely Culbertson. Garden City: Garden City Publishing Company. 64 pages. $1.

These reservations do not destroy my sincere admiration for Culbertson's effort—its fine spirit, its incredible ingenuity, the boldness of many proposals. As a challenge, as a syllabus for animated discussion, it is of the highest value. As a definite scheme, it is thoroughly and irremediably unrealistic.

Both Paul Einzig[1] and Otto Tod Mallery[2] approach the problem from the economic angle. Einzig is against a "soft" peace (but a hard peace may be brittle). He very effectively destroys the inveterate legend about the harshness and vindictiveness of Versailles. Everyone knows that the next peace will have to be considerably more ruthless than the semi-Wilsonian settlement of 1919. His essential plea is: "Disarm Germany in the economic sphere. Destroy the excessive concentration of industrial power now in German hands." The thought is not unwise; the spirit is a trifle narrow, and insufficient for genuine peace. Einzig, like Mrs. Luce, is frankly thinking in terms of the Third World War. "Let us drain the Rumanian oil wells dry before the Germans grab them again."

Mallery's chief defect is exactly the reverse of Culbertson's. He would build a new world by a series of trade agreements—the Hull program amplified—while minimizing the political aspect of the problem. "The Universal is an abstraction. Only the part is concrete." Give me a part—the piston of an engine, a hair from an unknown animal—they will be concrete enough, and provide little information unless we are able to reconstitute the machine or the animal as a whole. In his eagerness for the hoary Manchesterian gospel of peace through free trade, Mr. Mallery distorts facts in a surprising manner. He would have us believe that the British, French and Dutch Empires rested on commercial exclusiveness: the old Colonial Pact. Preferential policies were not introduced into British and Dutch possessions until recently; and two-thirds of the French Empire—Equatorial Africa, West Africa, Morocco—were free-trade areas. On page 12, he deplores the fact that the former German colonies, open on equal terms under William II, were closed under the Mandate system. On pages 112-13, he recognizes that economic equality was guaranteed in the mandated territories, as well as in the whole Conventional Basin of the Congo—not so "microscopic" an exception. Mr. Mallery is to be commended for writing with the sprightliness of a radio advertiser; but government advisers should be more respectful of basic facts.

Hiram Motherwell's book, "The Peace We Fight For,"[3] is not merely the most readable of the four but the most original and vigorous in thought. Mr. Motherwell draws a dire picture of Europe on the morrow of the Armistice. Too somber, I hope: many parts of Europe will be reconquered and reorganized before the collapse of

[1] Can We Win the Peace? by Paul Einzig. New York: The Macmillan Company. 148 pages. $2.

[2] Economic Union and Durable Peace, by Otto Tod Mallery. New York: Harper and Brothers. 183 pages. $2.

[3] The Peace We Fight For, by Hiram Motherwell. New York: Harper and Brothers. 281 pages. $3.

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Germany; and Germany herself might well get rid of the Nazi regime without falling to pieces. But if we keep sowing the seeds of civil war, and if we do not prepare to meet the emergency, Mr. Motherwell's forecast may err on the side of optimism.

Europe, in any case, will have to be taken vigorously in hand if anarchy, starvation and pestilence are to be averted. Here Mr. Motherwell's fault is perhaps that he is not sufficiently convinced of his own ideas. The solutions he offers merely to meet the emergency seem to me excellent to start Europe on the road to permanent reconstruction. If we consider them purely as temporary measures, they will lose much of their power and efficacy. If we start flirting with the old economic, political and military nationalisms, Europe will remain a festering sore. Europe, west of the Curzon line, must be treated as a whole, not chopped up into lifeless subfederations. And Europe must be frankly socialistic. This not on theoretical grounds: simply because the emergency demands it, and because the Nazis, through their looting, have so thoroughly scrambled property rights that there is no *status quo* that can be recaptured. What we need is a clean slate—I dare not say a New Deal, since the term has lost 41 percent of its meaning.

Mr. Motherwell still shares the absurd pro-German bias of many pre-war Americans. He believes and repeats the worst that the French say of themselves, and has an orthodox Carlylean reverence for "the stern religious loyalties" of Hitler's followers. Unless this delusion is thoroughly dispelled, there will be little chance for genuine peace. Nazis can be reclaimed, but they are not entitled to preferential treatment. Many of Mr. Motherwell's proposals are open to challenge. But the book as a whole is both stimulating and constructive.

ALBERT GUÉRARD

Poet and Prophet

South American Journey, by Waldo Frank. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce. 404 pages. $3.

THE POSITION OF WALDO FRANK in South America is perhaps not clearly appreciated in North America. He is not primarily a novelist, but his southern fame, with the limited urban literate public, is comparable to the reputation of Jack London or Upton Sinclair in Russia or Scandinavia.

In his present book, as in all previous ones, he is revealed as poet, preacher and frequently prophet. Now, inevitably, he has become diplomat and politician too. As a poet, Frank has a lively sensory facility, recalling the geographical impressions of D. H. Lawrence. His psychological, or rather geo-sexual, observations derive from Jung rather than Freud. They can be read as arrogant, even irritating. But Frank is essentially innocent, and his service (one recalls Hemingway's opinion of "Virgin Spain" in "Death in the Afternoon") is certainly of historic importance.

Frank is observant, with a rather preformulated vision, and shrewd as well. Anyone with a trace of realism who works in Latin America knows that our State Department representation is no mere nest of proto-fascists, or screen for the absence of the Marines. No diplomat in the official sense, Frank knows that in our embassies are many obscure, underpaid and overworked public servants. Lonely and forgotten, they are not cheered by the difficulties of visiting compatriots, whom they unquestioningly aid. When the attack on a prominent American comes, as it does at times, often to innocent travelers, in payment for past national sins, they frequently handle the matter with as much finesse as the British, which is saying much. Frank, in describing the murderous attack on himself in Buenos Aires, is a model of reserve.

But there are many things which may render "South American Journey" more of a success in its certain Spanish and Portuguese translations than in the original. Frank the poet says here, as he continually admits in references to his other books, what he has said before. Frank the preacher is, as always, attempting simple solutions of complex problems by flash generalizations, usually by the use of the pathetic fallacy, *i. e.*, Brazil is The Forest; Argentina is The Pampa. Frank the politico-diplomat is on shifty ground, apart from his standing for the personification of democracy in lands where the governments tend, to say the least, toward the authoritarian. In his role of poet, he tells us, he offers the idea of mutual merger as his parting gift to Bolivia-Paraguay. Aside from the howls from La Paz-Asunción, one wonders whether the Foreign Offices of Buenos Aires or Lima think this is a trial balloon from an admirer of Sumner Welles or one more ineptitude from the ineffable Yanqui.

Also, it must be admitted, Frank is careless and prejudiced. Few recent travel books have contained so many misspelled place and proper names—on the end papers, for example, Tucaman, Comodore Rivadavia, etc. We also have Mardel Plata repeatedly, and even "monotonus." This may not be significant, but it is parallel to a lax attitude masked by the assumption of ubiquity and omniscience. Frank affects a poetico-scientific vocabulary—such words as haemal, telluric, pincel, antiphone (for contrast), landside and inferno-esque. Yet he dismisses the whole curious problem of São Paulo by saying he "will have none of it" since it boasts a "highbrow hegemony." He awards Portinari, the painter, an all-American primacy his essential facility has never merited. In São Paulo lives Lasar Segall, an artist of the rank of Lipchitz or Chagall, Mario de Andrade, a fine poet and the instigator of the best of modern Brazil's interest in folklore in plastic art and music, excellent architects and such able public servants as Roberto Simonsen and Borba de Moraes, director of the finest library in Latin America.

The sentiments Frank expresses are all proper. There is information about Brazil and Argentina which may be interesting to those who have not read such prime sources as Euclides de Cunha, Gilberto Freyre, Sarmiento or Martinez Estrada. But it is scarcely a book for future contemplation. Rather it is a personal appraisal of an immediate past. One feels Frank's preoccupation—but his limitations impede a real illumination. He is a victim of the habit of our twenties—to see history, geography and economics as a kind of rhapsody which is a pretext for idiosyncratic expression. And we must admit that most Latin American culture (unlike European or our own) is not exportable. There is no point in calling "Martin Fierro" a *great* poem, merely because, with "Don Fausto," it is the *only* poem about the gaucho. Great like what? Onegin or Don Juan?

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Culture has its local, as well as its international values. The interest in Latin America is in the precision of local differences. Frank does it little service by trying to stampede the recalcitrant sectarian streams into an unanimistic world-flood, or to pretend that it is, or has been, a source rather than a tributary. Latin America is a complex of tough nuts, like Canada, Australia, the Balkans and South Africa. Instead of promiscuous affection, it needs surgical understanding. One is sure that Frank has far more of it than he cares to show. LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

On Assignment

There's Something in the Air, by Flying Officer X (H. E. Bates). New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 172 pages. $2.
I Seek My Prey in the Water: The Coastal Command at War, by Squadron-Leader Tom Dudley-Gordon. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 297 pages. $3.
War Eagles: The Story of the Eagle Squadron, by James Saxon Childers. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 350 pages. $3.75.

THESE THREE BOOKS are widely different in method and effectiveness. Two are straightforward accounts of details of the RAF, written by highly competent observers. The third is a collection of twenty-two brief stories about the men and women flying and working for the same force—in their moving compactness, in their sting of truth, among the first-rate glimpses of life during these years. But the connection between these books is one which points out to us in America one of our wartime lacks.

"Squadron-Leader Tom Dudley-Gordon" is the working name of three RAF officers, sent in uniform to cover the activities of the Coastal Command. Colonel Childers, of the United States Army Air Forces, lived with the Eagle Squadron and worked with the people and records of the Air Ministry and British Intelligence. H. E. Bates was commissioned in 1941 as Flying Officer X, and was stationed with the Bomber Command "to study the men of the RAF in and out of action."

The Coastal Command's "monotonous, gray work" over the Atlantic in its continual hunt for U-boats is only part of three sleepless missions: guarding, watching, attacking. The tales of the Channel, the North Sea, Malta, the chase of the Bismarck, the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau are all here, in this full account of the Coastal Command, pieced together by officers sent overseas and living at the home bases of the Coastal Command to write this book.

"War Eagles" is a more dramatic, personal account. It is full of the spirit of the advance-guard of Americans, who, like the Lafayette Escadrille and the Lincoln Battalion, went off to war while the country was still talking. It takes the Squadron from its early days of inexperienced fighting—"They're not a unified group," said an English officer, "in their background, or their ways of living, or their thinking. They'll never learn to fight as a unified group"—into their fighting maturity, man by man, as the reader grows to like them and chalk up their exploits, to turn the page and see their photographs—"killed in action," "killed in action," "killed in flying accident," "killed in action."

But the keen and colored look of the airman's world is in Bates's book. Fliers over the barbaric sea; the frosty nights with the sound of the bombers coming home; the bars, the English hills, the girls and parents of the fliers; they all stand clear and alive in these stories. And even the realities civilians have never known come through with the same clarity. Flak, for example, in a passage like this: "The solo loneliness, the tracer coming up at you, slow and orange until the last furious flashing moment, the moon over the miles and miles of cotton cloud, the flak so thick and many-colored that it hung in the night air like paper streamers at a ball." It is not chiefly the sounds and scenes that one remembers, however; it is the people. The boy in inner Australia who finally found out that there was a war on; the fliers whose parents worked in the fields; the girl saying to the part-French, Irish airman, "Oh, why do you hide yourself away from me?" Texas, caught up by raw hatred, saying, "Like it? It's a personal argument with me. It's a personal war!"

These stories, with their bite of truth, were written on assignment, as were the other two books. They build up into a body of work that indicates the responsibility which writers have to the war, and which a country at war has to its writers. America has not yet used her writers for what they can do. A responsible group should, at this time, be sending writers of all kinds to do their own work in relation to assigned fields of the war. Bates's book is an answer to the feeling that the journalist's account is the only treatment to be used. His stories, highly selected, and thrown into perspective against a thousand news items and eyewitness reports, are most effective links between a people at war and part of its force.

We need for our writers what our artists already have:

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By David J. Dallin

Translated by Leon Dennen

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"The most scholarly and well-documented history of our tortuous diplomacy. . . . He has achieved a masterly work of reporting, analysis, and interpretation. . . . His summary is terse and splendid."

HANS KOHN in the *New Republic*
"Learned, very readable treatise, based on a thoughtful perusal of available documents. . . . Dr. Dallin writes with impartiality and great serenity of judgment."

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a commission which can send them as writers doing war work, to the front lines of camps, factories and the theatres of war. The artists' directive reminded them of Goya and Daumier, and asked them to paint what the camera could never record. Our writers should be used on the same level. The job that these three books begin to do for the RAF needs to be done, piece by piece, for our own people.

MURIEL RUKEYSER

Mr. Justice Holmes

The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes: His Speeches, Essays, Letters and Judicial Opinions, selected and edited with an Introduction and Commentary by Max Lerner. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 467 pages. $4.

OF BOOKS concerning the late Mr. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. there have already been many; and more are definitely promised. This one is likely to be definitive of its kind. It is a casebook of selections from all Holmes's writings beginning with his biography for his college classbook and continuing down through his judicial career to his last letters and messages. Each selection is accompanied by an incisive and illuminating editorial comment. It has the advantage over the other books in that it gives the complete sweep of Holmes's thinking and writing, rather than only quotations from simply his famous opinions or dissents or from his equally famous speeches or letters. One finds it refreshing, indeed, to be able to see the man entire, even to his occasional slips—which the editor demonstrates are but natural consequences of his general views—as well as the great pieces on which his fame so securely rests. Here is reasoned, if sympathetic, evaluation, not the adulation now all too common.

First in the book appear fifty pages of "personal history" of Holmes, a brilliant summary of the great Justice in the lucid and persuasive prose we have come to expect from Max Lerner. Following are many of the early addresses, those commemorative of Memorial Day and a soldier's fighting faith and the high worth of law as a calling and a career. Then are extracts from his early essays, including the historic lectures on the Common Law and a remarkable casenote of 1873 showing fully developed his hard-boiled views that law and legislation represent force exercised for the dominant group; a judicious selection of his Massachusetts decisions so far as they dealt with public and labor matters; his greatest and some of his less great Supreme Court opinions; and finally some of the well known letters and later occasional addresses. Editorial comment may often run longer than the piece commented upon, but is effective in giving background and meaning to the piece. Indeed, I expect that the layman will find much more profit and enjoyment here than in most books concerned with the law. A nice touch in the discussion of Holmes's possibly most criticized decision—that affirming the wartime conviction of Eugene Debs—is a quotation from Professor Ernst Freund's trenchant criticism in The New Republic of May 3, 1919, set off by Holmes's human response—in a letter to Pollock—that "the spring is enchanting. . . . Really if a glance at The New Republic had not thrown the customary gloom over life it would seem fair once more."

Of the other criticized cases, the fair and explanatory comment on the Northern Securities dissent, urging limitation of the scope of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, the economic views disclosed in the resale-price-maintenance cases, and the "Draconian" tort cases, accepting the Massachusetts denial of liability in the "attractive nuisance" cases, aid in a balanced appraisal of a human as well as a great judge. Naturally most familiar are the great dissents, which slowly brought the Supreme Court to a realization that the Constitution does permit experiment "as all life is an experiment. Every year if not every day we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based upon imperfect knowledge."

The comment on each shows not only its occasion, but its ultimate result—usually a late decision of the Court in accord. One may easily locate his favorites and compare them with one another. Was the bakeshop dissent "the most famous" in all legal history, as Lerner and Walton Hamilton seem to agree? Possibly in its setting, because it was the awakening call to a new liberal constitutionalism which has never since been repressed. Perhaps, however, a Brandeisian documented analysis, historical and practical, of the phrase "due process"—oddly enough never made in the Supreme Court, though the historic limitations on its scope had been familiar to scholars—might have made a better jumping-off point for future dissents than even the famous epigrams which conceded the right of judicial veto while repudiating its wide scope. Personally I think no one dissent alone should be so honored; after all it is the brief sentences in case after case which make the point with a minimum of words, but with such compelling insistence: "the more than anxiety" felt at the expansion of the Fourteenth Amendment, with "hardly any limit but the sky"; social experiments in "the insulated chambers" of the several states; "every idea is an incitement"; "freedom for the thought that we hate." All are here, and easily recognizable as they are made to serve as lead heads for the cases themselves.

How permanent will be Holmes's influence? Dr. Lerner refers to the fear of a Holmes cult, and this one can see in the striving of imitators, as well as in the chorus of adulation. But the real vitality of Holmes's views can be seen in the fears expressed of their influence even now, nearly ten years after his death. Today authors in the law reviews are attacking him as the fount of all New Deal legislation and as fathering a materialistic view of law which has contributed mightily to the sad state of the world. I suspect he would chuckle with a good deal of pleasure at such judgments and hope they were true. Certainly he did his part, and a magnificent one it was, too, in removing law from the exclusive possession of a single class, making it less divine and more human, a tool for human uses, rather than armor for ancient vested rights.

As one goes through these pages one comes back again to his early addresses on a soldier's faith and on law as a calling. Those were the days when crass materialism was in its most expansive mood and the lawyer was the avid servant of those forces which today we recognize as most destructive of a truly democratic ideal. Yet during all this period Holmes was lifting his voice—how the resonant phrases still thrill—in support of a view of law and life which was realistic in recognizing what men were actually

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doing under the egis of judicial doctrine, but which was much more: a powerful call to the highest idealism of the young man in the potentialities law offered to enable man to do what he wished not merely for himself, but for those less favored. It was this view, from which he never wavered, which he was finally able to utter from the bench of the highest court in the greatest judicial prose of our language, that makes his career so vital a force today. Every war seems to bring in a period of stark reaction. Signs indicate that such a period is now approaching. If we may hope, as I believe we may, that it will be less prolonged and less intense than before; if, too, many of our brilliant young men will still cherish a belief in idealism as a proper motivating force for a public career and law as an assisting means, then we owe, indeed, a large measure of gratitude to that wise, witty and eloquent aristocrat who dared to desert his class to express these thoughts when they were not popular, in words which still move and arouse, as they will continue to do for years to come.

CHARLES E. CLARK

Many Moods

A Treasury of American Song, by Olin Downes and Elie Siegmeister. Music arranged by Elie Siegmeister. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 408 pages. $5.

HERE IS A PLENTEOUS HORN of American folksongs, issued in a new edition, "revised and enlarged," on handsome quarto pages, with both words and melodies, and with highly serviceable piano accompaniments by Elie Siegmeister. The book should attract both those who want it for the songs' sake and those whose main interest is in the sociology of music.

The editors subdivide their treasury into sixteen compartments, ranging from devotional music in the medieval church modes to ballads of cocaine-sniffers, from the rollicking barn dance to the dirge of slaves, from the firm and steady tramp of soldiers on the march to the aimlessly shifting rhythms of the wanderers to nowhere.

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has its critical comment that points out the distinctive traits of both words and music. This comment is particularly apt at historical and psychological observations that reconstruct for us the kinds of situation out of which the songs arose and the kinds of quest to which they responded. Thus we are reminded that "the singing of chanties with their vigorous and clearly measured rhythms established the regular timing so necessary for the efficient execution of such tasks as weighing anchor, hoisting sail, manning the pumps." Or there is the night-herding song, a lullaby sung by a cowboy to a whole herd of cattle, that they may be kept calm during the night, reassured by the human voice, and so induced to ignore the night sounds that might otherwise cause them to stampede. Whereas each folksong was originally an act appropriate to a particular kind of scene, a scene that is by the nature of the case here missing, Mr. Siegmeister has tried in his arrangements, often with success, to give "a harmonic background in the piano intended to suggest the color originally provided by the physical background."

Like a second-hand-book store, this is a good place in which to browse around. Browsing, one gets a sense of great symmetry, for instance, on noting that the music of "John Brown's Body" came from a hymn popular in Negro churches in the 1850's. There is a jaunty bit of economic criticism developed about the refrain, "Oh the farmer is the man who feeds them all." Indeed, throughout the book, one finds in the words as direct an expression of economic motives as one finds, otherwise couched, in "The Federalist Papers." "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies," they sang exaltedly in the old camp-meeting song, "The Saint's Delight"; the promised land was indeterminately a mixture of life-after-death and good Western real estate; and there is the forlorn Negro wandering song, "Ah'm Broke an' Hungry," in a tune that is, as the authors well say, "remarkable for its drifting, shifting quality."

All told, going from page to page in this book, one must be both tone-deaf and intellectually a stone if he is not deeply moved by this spectacle of our country being both vigorously and painfully put together.

KENNETH BURKE

A Reader's List

THE BATTLE FOR BUENOS AIRES, by Sax Bradford (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50). A disturbing survey of the one Latin capital where Nazism still openly contends with democracy for popular support. There are vivid descriptions of Argentina and a report of the Nazi organization revealed by the Damonte Taborda Committee, but no explanation of the political machinery which until a few weeks ago permitted the Castillo government to ignore the democratic sympathies of the Argentine majority. Mutual understanding, Bradford says, is the only way to win Argentina's coöperation, and he argues (with justice) that Americans make little effort to understand Argentina. But at this moment in history it would seem more important that Argentina understand us.

ENGLAND'S ROAD TO SOCIAL SECURITY, by Karl de Schweinitz (Pennsylvania, $3). The history of English social security offers an immense storehouse of experience from which the modern social worker as well as the historian may draw. Traversing the six centuries from the repressive Statute of Laborers to the recent Beveridge Report, the author presents a succinct and well written account of that experience. Although intended primarily for the social worker, anyone interested in the problem of security and social insurance will find it a useful and interesting book.

THE ECONOMIC PATTERN OF WORLD POPULATION, by J. B. Condliffe (National Planning Association, 25 cents). One of the most original and interesting of the Planning Pamphlets, analyzing the economic significance of world population statistics. The author estimates the population trends in the various areas of the world and suggests their probable effect on living conditions. He believes that the best type of living conditions are provided by the interpenetration of urban and rural districts, on the American model. The pamphlet is full of provocative information about rising and falling birth rates, mortality rates, population densities and so on; and there are half a dozen splendid maps. It is "geopolitics" without any of the fancy words.

DYNAMO, by Hallie Flanagan (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, $2.75). Hallie Flanagan has always believed that "the theatre, when it is potent enough to deserve its ancestry, is always dangerous," and has demonstrated her ability to create such "dangerous" theatre both as Director of Federal Theatre and as head of the Experimental Theatre at Vassar. This book is a record of the productions of the Vassar Experimental Theatre from its inception in 1925 to the present. Discussion of the actual productions is detailed and vivid, lending an added significance to the author's vision of the college theatre as an increasingly powerful force not only in education, but in the American theatre and the post-war world.

Contributors

A. G. MEZERIK has had wide experience in the field of conservation and standards for consumers' goods. He was organizer and director of the Institute of Standards and has been acting as consultant to the American Standards Association.

VERA FRANKE, a political refugee from Germany, has been in this country since 1941. She has worked with the American Friends of German Freedom and has edited the "Inside Germany" Reports for two years.

JOHN BEECHER, formerly an administrator with the Farm Security Administration in the South, left his position with The New York Post last month to join the United States Maritime Service. At present he is sailing as ship's clerk on the S.S. Booker T. Washington.

CHARLES E. CLARK, former dean of the Yale Law School, is a United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

PVT. LINCOLN KIRSTEIN has recently completed his training as a combat engineer in the United States Army. His most recent books were the Catalogue of Latin American Art in the Museum of Modern Art and a novel on Mexico (with José Martinez), published by the Hogarth Press, London.

MURIEL RUKEYSER, poet and author of "Willard Gibbs," has just resigned from the OWI.

KENNETH BURKE is at present writing a book, "On Human Relations," dealing with the interpretation of motives in human conduct.

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